THE CAPACITY FOR GOD

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Mystical Quest of Christ

La. Cr. 8vo. Cheaper Edition, 5s.

"A book packed with good things, rich in illustrations from history, literature and life, no less enriched by the author's personal experiences."—*British Weekly.*

"A devout thinker and preacher, he here gives us the fruits of his recollections with combined modesty and conviction which bespeak the attention of his readers."—*Times.*

An Autobiography

WITH PORTRAITS OF THE AUTHOR AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

Demy 8vo. Third Edition, 8s. 6d.

THE CAPACITY FOR GOD

(CONFESSIO CREDENTIS)

BY

ROBERT F. HORTON, M.A., D.D.

1855-

CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY NEW YORK

LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1

First published in 1926

(All rights reserved)

2395
H789
80085

GEN THEO SEMINARY
LIBRARY
NEW YORK

Printed in Great Britain by
Unwin Brothers, Ltd., Woking

"The soul, in its highest sense, is a vast capacity for God."—DRUMMOND.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE MASTER FACULTY	11
II.	THE WORD	26
III.	THE BOOK	43
IV.	THE BIBLE OF NATURE	59
V.	SALVATION BY FAITH	75
VI.	HEALING BY FAITH: "CHRISTIAN SCIENCE"	91
VII.	THEOSOPHY AND FAITH	109
VIII.	SPIRITUALISM AND FAITH	127
IX.	OTHER RELIGIONS AND FAITH	145
X.	MISSIONS FAR AND NEAR	161
XI.	PSYCHOLOGY AND FAITH	177
XII.	THE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP	194
XIII.	THE MASTER FACULTY AND THE OTHERS	210
XIV.	FAITH'S TRIAL	227
XV.	MEN WHO HAVE NOT FAITH	244
XVI.	THE CREED	259

THE CAPACITY FOR GOD

(CONFESSIO CREDENTIS)

CHAPTER I

THE MASTER FACULTY

Is the Master Faculty Reason? The thought of our day says No. Reason is regulative, but the life-force in us acts before Reason comes into play, and our personality as it develops is greater than Reason. The very definition of it, even the description of it, far more the possibilities of it, tax Reason far beyond its powers. The Master Faculty within us is that which puts us into relation with the Power that conceived and made us, and with the Purpose for which we exist. Reason leaves us very uncertain about the Power and the Purpose. Men have endlessly reasoned and argued upon that subject, and they continue to do so. But argument is met by argument. Reason opposes Reason. No decisive voice is heard in that collision of thinkers and philosophers.

Meanwhile there are many, how many we never know, who are in contact with the Power and know the Purpose. These are the saving element in human life. Thanks to these and their unconscious agree-

ment, the march of humanity continues and is not lost in the waste. These have discovered the Master Faculty and have by it related themselves to the Power, and brought their life, their doing and thinking, into line with the Purpose. And it is not too much to say that if all human beings had discovered and learnt to use the Master Faculty, the life of men and of society would be harmonious and progressive.

To define that Master Faculty is comparatively easy. The great schoolman, Thomas Aquinas, gives the definition in five words: *Credere est cum assensu cogitare.* A more modern definition, a little longer, is more explicit:

> Faith is the affirmation and the act
> Which makes eternal truth a present fact.

But it is not a definition of which we are in search. What we desire and require is to know how the Master Faculty is to be used. We need not talk about it, if only we know how to use it. We gain something by the study of great thinkers who have discussed and defined. But much more is gained by seeing those who have used the Master Faculty, those who by using it have lived and helped others to live, have brought the world forward on its adventurous path.

The object of the present book is to get at the secret of using the Master Faculty. There are many who conscientiously decline to use it, because they imagine that Reason forbids it. There are many who are completely ignorant of those who have used it, and have no idea what it is. On the other hand, there are

some who recognize that others know and use it, and would gladly learn the secret, if they could. These may be helped by knowing what an ordinary person has found possible. It seems certain that if only people knew what is put within their power, and how to connect themselves with the real forces that govern the world, they would avail themselves of their human prerogative. None of us need live as the lower animals do, governed merely by instinct and appetite. None of us need be mere things, as so many seem to be,

> Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
> Like stocks and stones and trees.

Let us approach the subject in a direct and simple way. Common intelligence tells us that the Power which produced the ordered world, human life, and our own consciousness, must be accessible to us, because It is working in us. A poet and man of science, like Goethe, says to Eckermann: "I worship him who has filled the world with such productive energy, that if only the millionth part comes to life, the world swarms with living creatures, so that war, pestilence, flood and fire produce no effect on them: that is my god." Goethe calls the It Him. He does so for the simple reason that a great and active intellect cannot think of the Power that made everything as *less* than Intelligence, less than Personality.

Another poet and moralist, like Matthew Arnold, will recognize in the Power that produced and directs things, "a stream of tendency not ourselves that makes for righteousness"; he will not say He, because

that seems to be making the Power in our own image, and limiting the Being that alone is Great by the bounds which to us Personality imposes. But as Dr. Rashdall says, *things* do not make for righteousness, only a moral being can. The Power that made us, we instinctively know, must understand us. We say He or Him, because we cannot conceive any It understanding us. We do not mean that He is a limited, finite being like ourselves. Far from it. All we mean is that the Being that is the source of our being, must know, must care, must be close to us, in communication with us. The childish notion that He is altogether such an one as ourselves, to which thinkers give the name Anthropomorphism, was a stage in the thought of primitive man, who attributed to the Maker hands and eyes and feet, and made him a man of like passions with himself, only larger and more powerful. We repudiate Anthropomorphism ; we confess that childish thoughts of Him have to be put away with other childish things. But, renouncing all attempts to define the indefinable, or to circumscribe the infinite, we abide by the instinctive certainty that the Power which made us, men able to think, to feel, to act on a moral principle, to seek a spiritual life, is in this sense a Person, like us, that He thinks and feels and acts, He distinguishes right from wrong, He can draw us into spiritual communion with Himself. When Robert Louis Stevenson discovered that the great unknown Power that made and controls the universe meant well by him, he was in line with most of the great thinkers of all time. Pessimists are

common enough, but they convince no one. It is impossible seriously to maintain that the universe means ill to us; that human life is the sport of a malignant power. Thomas Hardy's closing sarcasm about Tess of the D'Urbervilles, that the higher powers had done with her in her suffering and sorrow according to their intent, pleases the momentary resentment of the human spirit, but cannot satisfy the full intelligence of man. The Power that made us is other than that; other than that is the purpose for which we were made.

We need not enter on a train of elaborate reasoning. We need not attempt impossible definitions, or pretend to lay out the attributes and relations of the Being out of whom we came. We may claim the privilege of the child, when we have put away childish things, and be sure that the Power that made us is close to us.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet,
Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands or feet.

We may be sure that He understands us, and though there is no form, nor voice, no physical compulsion or direction, we may assume that He cares, that He loves, that He works, that He will do what is best for us, for all.

Faith is to act on that assumption, to treat the assumption as fact, and to rely on it. It is not so much the assent of the intellect as the act of the whole personality. Beware of the mistake that faith is only a mental assent to a proposition or a theory,

or a statement about God; faith in that sense might be inoperative. Faith is above all a deed, a strenuous, resolute deed, a great and courageous venture. To oppose it to works is a wrong antithesis. It is the best and most effectual of works. It is the deed, or series of deeds, in life which makes the greatest difference. It is the Master Faculty in operation.

Put it in this way: Faith is the fling of the soul on the Unseen Power, from whom the soul came. A life of Faith is the habitual exercise of that Faculty, the ever surer and more convinced reliance on the Power not ourselves, a Power that works in us, not only to do, but to will.

Self-reliance! It is a fine word, and suggests a needed precept, so long as it is understood to be reliance on one's self as against dependence on others. But it is not a fine word, nor does it suggest a wise precept, if it means reliance on one's self instead of dependence on the Power not ourselves. Indeed, though for a moment of exuberant youth and health, a man may seem to himself sufficient to himself, it is only for a moment, and almost immediately his own boast mocks him. Our brave poet roused our admiration by his proud exclamation:

> I am the master of my fate,
> The captain of my soul.

But it was not long before he was in hospital, and wrote lines of exactly the opposite tenor. A man is a very helpless, hapless creature, left to himself. His body is very fragile, and only kept in life by a ceaseless

miracle. His mind is apt to lose its balance, and even to soften into idiocy. His fortunes swiftly turn. Nietzsche, exalting the Superman, became insane. Napoleon, after conquering Europe before he was fifty, ended his days in the narrow confines of St. Helena. Verily man at his best estate is altogether vanity. And if his reliance is on himself alone, he is a pitiable little creature, ridiculous to his fellows, and more ridiculous to the higher powers of the universe.

One thing only redeems him; he can fling himself on the Unseen Power, and trust Him, he can lose himself in the Oversoul, he can become the conscious and grateful organ of that larger life, the instrument and mouthpiece of the Being who made him, and made him for Himself.

A good deal has been thought and said in late years to bring home to ordinary people this great reality. The book of Ralph Waldo Trine, *In Tune with the Infinite*, has exercised an immense and far-spread influence, because it makes the reader aware of that Power and Purpose working perpetually, so far above the finite lives of us human units, and yet in so close contact with each, so ready at all times to relieve the infinitesimal soul of its dread responsibility and appalling isolation. Into the mighty current of the Infinite, which is love, as well as wisdom and power, everyone can, if he will, push his tiny bark, and be borne along sweetly and securely to the murmuring sea. And another American has sounded a note which echoes round the world, in this case a woman. She has insisted on God as Good. She has made men and

women fix their thought on that One Goodness which rules over all, to the exclusion of all doubts and perplexities; and many troubled and diseased mortals have found peace and health come back to them, as they lose themselves in Him. Faith, let us repeat again and again, is the fling of the soul on the Unseen God. It is an act indeed, the greatest act we ever perform. To be induced to attempt and to achieve that act is the greatest benefit that can ever come to us. To make life a constant repetition of that act, until the act is a habit, and the habit is a character, is the one thing needful.

For now this is to be stated, and proved in experience. That fling of the soul on the Unseen God is justified, verified, approved, more and more approved, until it becomes a certainty, the surest certainty in the range of human experience. This is the one thing we absolutely know about the Unseen Power, that it responds to our absolute trust, and proves to be personal in the sense that a person comes into direct relation with it. The one thing we know. Much is conjectured and reasoned, much is argued, much imagined. Poetry, fable, theology, philosophy, and increasingly science, say many things about that Power, which interest, charm, captivate us. But we cannot say we *know* these things; at the most we say we believe them, or would like to believe them. When Theology says God is Omnipotent, or Omniscient, or Omnipresent, we may believe it, but to call that belief knowledge is confusing. But when I say " God is Power to me, God knows me, God is near to me. I speak to Him, and He hears;

I trust in Him and He performs, underneath are the everlasting arms," I speak what I know. This is my knowledge of God, and it is all my *knowledge* of God, what He is to me, what He has done for me, what He is doing. For to my trust He responds; not to my senses indeed, there is no form, no sound; not by miracle, except in the sense that all is miracle; not by sign or wonder. He responds to *me*, my personality, that inner consciousness which entitles me to say I. His response enables me to say: He and I. My God, and therefore I, only *I* because God is; in Him I live and move and have my being. If anyone asks me: But what is God? I answer: Ah, but what am I? What I am I cannot explain, nor can I explain what God is. But as I know I am, I know He is.

The things that are said about God, in the Bible for instance, I can examine with interest. I value also the thoughts of philosophers, like Plato and Aristotle, or Thomas Aquinas, or Descartes, or Kant. I find Eucken illuminating about the spiritual, which makes and regulates the material, and man and human life. In the discussion of these things there is a study for a lifetime. Above all, it is a study never to be remitted, to know what God was to Abraham in the dawn of history—the father of those that exercise faith; or to Moses, who received a Law and made a People, by his experience of God; or to Elijah, who ventured his life against false and lowering views of God; or to Isaiah and the rest of the prophets, whose clearing vision of God I would share. And what God was to Christ clears up so much and makes Him so

unspeakable, lovable and worthy of trust, so Father-like, that I can rest in Him as a child rests in his father's arms. But what I know is not God in the abstract, God in general and metaphysical terms, nor God as He has been or is known to others, but the Being who asks for and responds to my trust and shows by the experience of the years, that He is always at hand, moulding me, directing my life, protecting and delivering me, forgiving and restoring me, breathing within me a deathless hope.

Thus, I knew one long years ago who starting out in life, was led to trust in God, and to take certain words of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount as intended to be the principle, the guiding principle of life. He resolved therefore that he would not direct his life for the money payment which might be offered; he would try to choose his course and do his work without regard to that consideration; he would trust God as his heavenly Father, to attend to that side of life, while he would devote himself wholly, according to Christ's words, as the understanding of them should come to him, to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." His temperament was anxious, full of forebodings, and naturally he would have tried to earn and to save. But through long years to the term of human life, he tried to act on his elected principle. Nor did God fail him; nay, it became increasingly clear as years went on that God accepted the trust, and "loved the burthen." Whatever else might seem to fail or to be wanting, he never was allowed to be worried by the care of getting. What

was needed came, always slightly more than what was needed. He never tried to "make money," but found that the silver and the gold belonged to another, and it was not only wise but honest to let the owner keep it and dispense it. And by that faith he discovered the secret that God could and would provide the money for all that He wants to be done, so far as men would only wish to do what He wants to be done, and would trust Him absolutely to supply what was needed.

And I knew such an one in those early years agitated by the question of a career, asking to be guided. Undergraduate days over, there was the prospect of happy and congenial work in his college, a scholastic and literary life which had for him a strange fascination. But there was the low mysterious call to the Ministry. He was told by college authorities that in college work he could preach, and all around were opportunities of service wider, more important than could be found in the ministry. But the low mysterious call persisted. He knew that his deep desire was to do the will of God, and not to follow his own devices. But there were two competing claims; which was the will of God? There was nothing for it but to walk *by faith*. No miraculous voice was heard, no hand was reached out of the cloud to guide. But clearer than any voice, more decisive than a guiding hand, was the direction given. By an apparent accident he was asked to preach in a small iron church where a handful of people gathered. Presently a year's absence from college enabled him to take a room and carry on the services consecutively. When he returned to the

college work, that low mysterious call to the ministry had become the eager request of a body of people to come over to help them. Still that claim of the college seemed the stronger ; work opened out there such as he desired to do, such as at that time no one else seemed likely to do. The conflict became acute, and it continued for three years. The anxiety to do the will of God continued, but the question, Which is His Will ? remained unanswered. Now the balance dipped to one side, now to the other. Whenever a decision was approaching in favour of one course, the other course started up with a more insistent appeal. For years after that time of indecision he had a nightmare in which the struggle was renewed. Had God then forgotten ? Was His ear deaf that He could not hear ? Far from it. Events shaped themselves gradually in such a way that the direction became unmistakable. That growing company of people set to work to build a church ; and, though waiting with unwearied patience, and refusing to exercise undue pressure, they showed their unwavering desire that he should come to them and undertake the charge of the church. Slowly, but at last decisively, the duty became clear. That college life and college work in the most beautiful city in the world was to be surrendered. The toil and obscurity of the ministry won the day. How clear it all was ! How difficult it then seemed to understand why the issue had been doubtful. Faith is setting the foot down in a mist, and finding it on a rock.

That decision at once began to receive confirmation. That ministry so questioningly, so hesitatingly begun,

went on for more than forty years, until the dream of scholastic and literary success had paled and vanished like a thin ghost; until that work of the ministry seemed the only, the predestined course, determined by a mother's prayers, approved by his father's God.

The only sure guide is the Power that made us; the only Purpose worth fulfilling is not our own but Another's. The Master Faculty is that which brings us into vital relation with that Power, and enables us to fulfil that purpose. But it may be said, if that Power is so near to everyone of us, and if by so simple and direct a step we may touch It, and be guided by It, what need is there for any to teach *us*? What need is there for *any* to teach? Is there not a Spirit in man, an unction from the Holy One, which saves us from dependence on one another, and brings us all into immediate and continuous dependence on God? The answer is, we are brought into mutual dependence, and we stand in need of one another's help and teaching, because though we are individuals in our relation to God, the whole body of humanity is to Him an Individual. The Power made us one, the Purpose is that we should realize our unity. As each becomes conscious of the Power, he should also become conscious of the unity. We are members one of another, is the supreme lesson of life. That the unity may some day become a fact is probably the purpose of the world, which will be realized, and can be realized only, by faith.

This mutual dependence has been illustrated in our day by a very singular personality, known for its

uniqueness to all the world. Helen Keller was born deaf and blind and necessarily therefore dumb. Smell and touch were her only senses of communication.

But for the devotion of her teacher she would have been immured in silence and darkness all her life. But that teacher, with the patience of love, taught her through her fingers alone to read. She read by the touch, read widely, inclusively. Through the senses accorded to her she acquired a knowledge of the outside world and an intense delight in its scents and vibrations. Imprisoned in that body was a mind of singular power, and when she began to write she had much to say, which she could express in language of force and beauty. When her teacher began to instruct her in religion, she was found to be an apt pupil. The name of God was told her, and she said with delight: "I knew Him all the time, but I did not know His name." All she was taught about God only expanded what she already knew. Here was a crucial instance, to show the nearness and accessibility of God to every human heart not through the senses, but by Spirit approaching Spirit. And yet here was a unique exhibition of our mutual dependence. The teacher was needed, the teacher is always needed. Though He is not far from any one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being, we know different things about Him, which we can impart to one another. In doing so we are drawn together, and drawn to Him. We shall know Him fully only when all contribute, and when Humanity as an Individual, is able to

say My God, as God says to Humanity, Thou art my son.

The preacher, the minister, the pastor is therefore needed, not that God leaves Himself without a witness to any human being, but because this is the method of His witness. He has His angels, or ministers of grace; He has His prophets, His apostles, His evangelists. The vast system of mutual ministry is ordained by one Spirit; He calls, as He wills, this one or that to speak His word, to shepherd His sheep, to tend the lambs of the flock. It would be useless for any one to preach unless God were close to all the hearers. The word preached must be mixed with faith in those that hear, as it must be uttered in faith by him who speaks. But the word is God's and must accomplish that whereunto it was sent.

Let us turn to consider that Word.

CHAPTER II

THE WORD

AFTER twelve years of ministry I was called, at the instance of Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, to cross the Atlantic, and to deliver the Lyman Beecher lectures on preaching at Yale. The call required me to examine my experience, and to realize what preaching had meant to me, how it was done, what was its value. I found, as I thought it over, that for me at least preaching meant that I received *by faith* what I had to give to my people. The key to it was in the familiar formula of the Old Testament : " The word of the Lord came."

When I began to inquire how the word of the Lord came to me, and how I received it, I made some discoveries, such as everyone makes who insists on a searching inquiry into his own mental processes. These discoveries were the subject of my lectures in the Divinity School at Yale.

There was at that time a professor of art in the University who took a remarkable interest in the lectures, and revealed to me a singular experience of his life. For some years he had received communications in this way : he *saw* written before his eyes in

letters of gold what he immediately copied down. What he thus received formed a considerable book, which he published under the title *The Way*. On my voyage home I read the book with the greatest interest and found it wholesome and illuminating. It was truth for life conveyed in a limpid and convincing style. If he had given me the book as his own composition I should have accepted it as the work of a deeply religious and highly cultured mind. But he assured me that it was not, consciously at least, his work. He was only the penman; he wrote what he *saw*. He thought that this unusual experience gave an explanation of the method of the prophets, and of the reason why their communications were called *visions*. The prophets were in the first instance *seers*; they saw the words before their eyes, the words of the Lord, and wrote them down. Thus the word of the Lord came to them. They did not originate it, or think it out; it *came*.

The professor in telling me, very shyly and modestly, this experience which cast light on the coming of the word of God to man, was, I felt, very disappointed that I had had no similar experience, and could not confirm, though I had no inclination to dispute, what had come to him, a professor of the fine arts, involuntarily called to be a prophet, or recipient of the divine word. But, as I tried to show in my lectures, I was conscious of the word of God coming to me in no miraculous way, but in a way more intrinsically miraculous than miracles. For I noted in my recollection of my method of preaching that I did not choose

my subjects, they came to me. In the delivery of sermons I could not prepare what I was going to say with any exactness or completeness. If I wrote everything out, I could read it, but I could not *preach*. If I tried to learn it beforehand my memory would fail in delivery. And as I inquired more strictly what happened I found it was this: Knowing that I was called to teach and to instruct the people, and to do so regularly, twice on Sunday, and once or more in the week, I gave myself to a constant and purposeful study, mainly of the Scriptures, but also of other books, history, philosophy, social science, and poetry. And, to avoid the dangers of the study and the student, I got into touch by systematic visiting with my people. It was a life of unremitting toil; I felt that I was not my own; I knew that I must live wholly to receive and to utter the word of God. There might be recreation, holidays, the intercourse with friends; but all must be subordinated to the main object, and then they contributed to the main object, as much as, sometimes more than, the specific toil. Life became a single interest; it had one steady and steadying purpose: to receive and to utter the word of God.

Very soon I noticed that in the careful and systematic study of the Bible subjects would start up with such vividness, such irrepressible insistence, that it seemed necessary to preach on them at once. I noted down these subjects in books. And then illustrations, arguments, sidelights would seem to come to my hands, from letters, from papers, from books, from the conversations of the day, so that the subjects would

grow as it were of themselves and would wait there for deliverance. Subjects were always there, pressing to be dealt with; the only embarrassment was to know which to select for each occasion. But as time went on I observed that the selection also came to me. Circumstances, or the experiences of life, or some particular demand, showed clearly that this subject must be taken for Sunday morning and that for the evening. For a week-night address the subject would usually be indicated in the morning of the day. Sometimes I could have answered the question, why I took that subject, sometimes I could not. But again and again I found that there were people in the congregation who were startled by the fact that the subject was just what they needed; they had come to church with a question in their minds, and the answer was direct and unmistakable. As I did not know what was in their minds, or that they were present, as I had no opportunity of choosing a subject to suit them, and in any case could not choose subjects to meet all needs, I began to recognize that my mind was directed by Another, that I was a mouthpiece, a little more than a mouthpiece perhaps, a mind seeking to be used by the exercise of all its faculties to gather what God was saying and to utter it, and yet strictly speaking, a mouthpiece. As He was uttering His word through me it became increasingly my one object, not to obstruct it, not to put my own desires or views or purposes in the way of it. "I will give you a mouth and utterance" became a realized promise. "The Holy Spirit shall teach you in that day what ye shall say" describes

what happened, what often to one's amazement, and sometimes to one's adoring gratitude, actually happened.

It was this experience, common I supposed to all preachers, that I tried to give in my lectures. Without claiming for the preacher any equality with the great prophets of Israel, the lectures showed how the preacher is in line with the prophets rather than with the priests, and how the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the recognition of Christ as the Word of God incarnate, determined the preacher's office and activity : he was the witness of Christ, by the Spirit of Christ that was in him. And the practical application of the lectures was to urge on those who were entering into the ministry, such habits of life, such methods of study, such communion with God, as would enable them year in and year out, to give to their people the word of God.

The response to these lectures, embodying the experience of twelve years, was hesitating and partial. When they were published under the title of *Verbum Dei*, Bishop Westcott, as I was told by one of his students, recognized an ideal of preaching which he would recommend to his clergy. Sometimes in the course of the years I have heard from preachers, who either heard the lectures, or read the book, that this doctrine of preaching had been the making of their lives and of their ministry.

But speaking broadly the trend has been in these years towards the sacerdotal view of the ministry. Preaching has been subordinated to sacraments, and in churches where the importance of preaching has

been maintained, there has been a hesitation to admit that every preacher may receive his message from God, and perhaps a hesitation to submit to that self-discipline and *askesis* of life, which makes it possible for such a message to come. Books are written to show how the sermons are made; books of illustrations are provided; books of outlines are put into the preacher's hands; sermon-making becomes a craft, a business, which the minister acquires, as the lawyer learns his precedents, or the doctor his prescriptions.

Thus a recent book on preaching issues from the University of Chicago Press, analysing eight sermons by great preachers, and instructing the apprentices of the preaching craft to provide themselves with work-sheets, and to analyse the sermons according to a fixed, mechanical plan. As the result of this the coming preachers are supposed to be provided with a mass of material from which by a process of inductive reasoning they may attain to a knowledge of the principles of preaching. Certainly if that is the way to become a preacher I have been misled all my life, and so far as my book has influenced others I have been misleading them.

But strange to say, I have had the opportunity of testing my doctrine, by continuing in the same pulpit for thirty-three additional years. If after twelve years I might be supposed to be only feeling my way, after forty-five years I may speak with more confidence. I speak only from the standpoint of the preacher, and not from that of the hearers. God forbid that I should seem to commend my view of preaching by referring

to results. Indeed, it may be urged against my view that my own preaching has been ineffective, or that its influence has been confined to a very narrow circle. But from the point of view of the preacher that experience of the twelve years has been confirmed in the thirty-three. Always the subjects have been given by the quiet processes above described. Always it has been a surprise how the subject came. Very often the subject has come, before the general public have realized the trend of thought, and then, as everyone began to recognize it, I have wondered, and my hearers have wondered, how it came to me. All that I can say is : it is not my doing ; it is marvellous in my own eyes. It is by *faith*, and not by sight, that I have continued these long but never tedious years.

The vocation of the minister is only cited here as an instance because it happened to be that of the writer, and therefore occurred most readily. But the use of the Master Faculty which enables a preacher to go on and to do his work for a lifetime is available for every son of Adam and daughter of Eve, if they will take the trouble to exercise it. Granted that the work of a minister, pastor, priest, is in a sense important, yet it is not of any greater importance than any other vocation in the complex organism of human life. If God calls a man to do a thing, whatever the thing may be, the response to that vocation must be the same in all cases ; in all cases alike the need of the divine help is manifest, and it is received by the same method. It is a delusion, a very natural delusion, but none the less a delusion, that some occupations or callings are more

important than others. Some are legitimate and some illegitimate. But all legitimate callings and occupations of men, necessary to the corporate life of humanity, are God-appointed, and are wholly dependent on God. They are fulfilled properly by faith in Him. The religious and the secular life, if the distinction may be for a moment allowed, ought to be equally a life of faith. As religion becomes burdensome and sterile when it falls into works, instead of faith ; so any secular calling becomes a bondage and a futility when faith goes out of it. In the common tasks of life, in the pursuit of the ordinary calling, we are saved not by works but by faith. Some do their works for themselves, with a view to their own profit and enjoyment—they have no fear of God before their eyes—and they find in the long run vexation and disappointment. They join in the cynical refrain " Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Others do their works as unto God, seeking to know His will for them, relying on His help in matters great and small ; their life is throughout a life of faith ; their light grows clearer and larger unto the perfect day.

Principal Jacks has recently been insisting on the necessity of finding in our workmanship our life and our religion. He has observed the lamentable tendency of our time to treat the day's work as a mere task to be got through as a means of earning a living, and to look only at the clock for the hour of release, when in sport or leisure the day's life really begins. Along that line we travel to weariness and disgust, pessimism and despair. But indeed it is our work which is our

life ; in that we make our contribution to the sum of the world's life ; in that, or in nothing, we serve God. That is not quite a strong enough way of putting it In our life's work, whatever it may be, if we will have it so, the word of God comes to us, and utters itself. The work is the word ; God is in that way expressing Himself, for so He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

When men lose sight of this, and do their life work without God, without reference to Him, detached from the Power and the Purpose of all things, they go all astray. They are like derailed carriages, or engines out of control. Misery and ruin are the result. And the cause of all the failure and discontent and disappointment of human life, the slums at one end and the joyless mansions and pleasureless pleasures at the other, is that the occupations and labours of men have escaped from the one control which keeps them right and makes them useful, the direction of the supreme power, received by faith.

The papers are constantly advertising the advantages and results of Pelmanism. By this method of mental training and discipline, it is said, efficiency is secured, and success in a business career is assured. But there is a Pelmanism which has been in use much longer, and is supported by more abundant evidences. It is well illustrated by the story of Abraham in the dawn of history, and ever since that early date there have been those, like Joseph in Egypt, or Moses in the Exodus, or David in the founding of the monarchy, or the Apostles in the founding of the Church, who have

secured efficiency, and have been guided in the right way, and have made their lives a grand success, by the exercise of the Master Faculty.

Every now and then a very eminent life is laid bare to us, and we see in the open what in ordinary lives is going on unobserved. The life of William Ewart Gladstone is most illuminating. He was in the fore-front of the nation's life for sixty years. He was followed, believed in, reverenced to such a degree that his slightest word on the most ordinary subject was immediately quoted all over the country. As a speaker he was unrivalled, in Parliament, on the platform, or in the open air, on Blackheath, or in the winding valley of Nant Gwynant. As a leader of the House of Commons he was never surpassed; at his death there was such a unanimous demonstration of admiration and affection as the House had never seen before. His legislative and political achievements are as great as can be attributed to any other statesman in England: he secured Free Trade; he established national education; he widened the franchise, and laid cautiously the foundation of the inevitable democracy; he took in hand the desperate history of Ireland, and by reforming the land system, and endeavouring to restore to it self-government, he laid the train for the future reconciliation of the sister islands. Yet his most notable achievement was his advocacy of all oppressed peoples, the Neapolitans misgoverned by Bomba, the Bulgarians massacred by the Turks. His name rang through the world as the champion of liberty, and order, and peace, the forerunner of those who are to

substitute Law and International Tribunals for the feeble, fumbling, and futile arbitrament of war. This was the most effective and most successful life lived among us in the nineteenth century, the most conspicuous and influential abroad as well as at home. Such a life we have not seen before or since. In contrast with it other lives seem one-sided, halting, inconclusive. And the secret of this extraordinary life was, that from very early days Gladstone maintained a close communion with God, and in a humility which seems almost incredible to those who saw his exceptional powers, depended entirely on God for guidance and help. He told a friend that he never rose to speak in the House without silently lifting up his heart to God for guidance and inspiration. No one in the country was so regular in his attendance, twice a day, at worship. In a word the whole great life was lived by the Master Faculty, Faith. He was not perfect; he made mistakes, but taking the life as a whole, we should perhaps all be agreed that such a life we might wish ours, if it were possible, to be.

In his later days Mrs. Benson, the wife of the Archbishop, called on him and found him very weak in his chair, but still able to speak in the tones of a voice which was never surpassed for range or for richness. She asked what she could do for him, and he replied: "Pray for the poor sinner you see before you." That humility is the mark of one whose life has been not his own but God's, who recognizes that whatever has been effective has been God's doing, who is only conscious in himself of weakness and failure.

There may be only one Gladstone, but there are thousands, men and women, doing the work of the world, who walk by the same rule. Their efficiency comes from the habit of putting their whole life into God's hands by faith, and of taking from the unseen source the needed supplies of wisdom and power.

Another such life, in the sphere of business, was laid bare when George Cadbury died. The fulness and efficiency of this life had been manifest for years. The success of the cocoa works seemed only the means for carrying out ever-enlarging schemes of benevolence. The care for the welfare, physical and spiritual, of the workpeople led as if by an inner impulse to the colleges of Woodbrooke, which became as it were automatically a religious university, the influence of which goes out to the ends of the earth. The secret of this beneficent and successful life was faith. All was clear when the story was told. Consciously, deliberately, and consistently, George Cadbury and his brother put their faculties, their business, their money, at the disposal of God. They did not appear to be concerned about themselves, but they were bent on promoting the welfare of their fellow-men, in Birmingham, in England, in the world. Everything seemed to prosper with them, because their own prosperity was only a means for the service of God.

Such a life is exceptional, but we are constantly making the discovery that the most effective lives are explained by the same principle. The true secret of success, or let us say, the secret of true success, is to get the personal life and activity linked, and to keep

it linked, with the Power and the Purpose of the whole. The faculty which does this is the Master Faculty.

These conspicuous lives are, almost audibly and unmistakably, words of God. But there are many syllables of His speech in humble and simple and obscure lives; and these soft syllables of His speech may be as important to Him as those more emphatic words.

Let a man do his daily work as unto God, working in the shop honestly and diligently, always with the underlying thought: "This is what God gave me to do, from Him be the power, to Him be the glory," and his work will become a worship and his life a prayer. The world's welfare and progress depend on these unobserved workers. They must be many more than we know, or the world would be much worse than it is and would progress much less than it does.

On the other hand a great deal of work goes on, outside the control of God, work which He disapproves, or work done without reference to Him. And it is this godless work which brings into human life tedium and disgust, revolt and anarchy, hatred and malice, quarrels and wars. All men have not faith. Alas, the result is so distressing that we get blind to the fact that men as a rule have faith, and the main trend of the world's life is the life of faith.

Nowhere is the Master Faculty more needed than in the realm of Art. For to every artist—and in a degree every one is an artist—the task is entrusted to express a word of God to others; it is the beauty of God

that through the toil and consecration of the artist is to find expression. And the artist can never utter his word, if he doubt God or loses Him. He can do his work, building, painting, carving, writing, singing, only so far as he is able by the Master Faculty to put himself into vital relation with the Power and Purpose of the universe, that the beauty which is God may find expression through brain and hand and heart. All art began in religion. Man wanted to bring an offering to God, and made his model or scratched his picture on the cave wall, in order to propitiate the unseen. He built his Parthenon, as afterwards his St. Mark's, or St. Peter's, or St. Paul's, in order to worship him. In trying to delineate the ineffable forms, sculpture came to perfection in Phidias; and in trying to show to the eyes of men, Saints, the Mother and Child, Apostles, and Martyrs, births and crucifixions, the mosaist wrought the matchless processions of Ravenna, and painting rose to its perfection in Raphael and Michael Angelo.

Landscape came into the realm of art through the windows and porticoes of buildings which contained a Nativity, or a Spozalizio, or an Annunciation. And when it freed itself from its origin, and became of value for itself alone, it was nature as the expression of God that inspired the painter's work. Constable painted the English climate, and made his countrymen look at their own fields, and foliage, and skies, with the sun breaking through, and the wind blowing, and the rain showers dispersing; and at last he induced them to look, because, to use his own words: "I have

kept my brightness without my spottiness, and I have preserved God Almighty's daylight, which is enjoyed by all mankind, excepting only the lovers of old dirty canvases, perished pictures at a thousand guineas each, cart grease, tar and snuff of candle."

When religion dies out of art beauty vanishes. When the artist is dependent only on his senses and his own capricious mind, his work quickly loses dignity and charm and may even become an apotheosis of ugliness.

" An artificer of anything," said Plato, " if he looks towards that which always subsists according to Eternal Principles, and from this, as a kind of pattern, conceives the form and nature of his work, he must thus necessarily produce something wholly beautiful ; but where he employs for his pattern only that which is generated, it cannot be beautiful."

The fault of much which is called art, in architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, drama, is that the artist lacked the Master Faculty. He had no connection with the eternal and the universal ; he had no contact with God, and gave no opportunity to God to speak through him. On the other hand, a Jean François Millet will arrest the eye and the heart of all generations (except his own) by a stubble field and a distant building, and two peasants standing with bowed heads in the furrows. I have seen an exhibition of sculptures, all or almost all, absolutely, or almost absolutely ugly, some revolting, and incredibly debasing, and I have seen a deluded public, led by a fashion, trying to admire them. And I have realized how appalling man

is without God, how debased the human is when it loses the divine.

It has for long seemed impossible to build as they did in the age of faith. We wait and wonder whether in the Liverpool Cathedral the vision has returned. A great building cannot be devised by rule, it comes only out of a soul, and can be executed only by artificers who have a soul in their work. How could we build a church, or a dwelling, a business place, or a railway station with any intrinsic beauty in it, unless we saw it outlined against the heavens, and realized that God was concerned with it, to be worshipped in it, or to live in it, to transact in it the necessary business of life, to marshal men's going to and fro in the earth ?

It is unfortunate that religious phrases and formulæ, when they become trite, prevent us from realizing what, stated in other terms, is sufficiently indisputable. The whole of man's life on the planet must be fulfilling a purpose. To treat it as a fortuitous concurrence of atoms, and a perpetual movement from nothing to something and from something back again into nothing, is too irrational to command any heartfelt assent. We must, because we ourselves are reasonable, assume that the universe is reasonable too. We must, because all our right actions are purposive, assume purpose in the sum total, or the flowing stream of actions on earth. This is an axiom. And granting this, it is not difficult to see that all our use and efficiency and success, through all our actions and designs, must depend on our being in harmony with the Purpose, and being

supported by the Power, which direct and impel the whole.

Whoever maintains that man cannot know that purpose and put himself into conscious relation with that power, reduces life to an absurdity or a despair, and sends men to some narcotic or debauchery to cover the fraud :

> What, without knowing, hither hurried whence,
> And, without knowing, whither hurried hence !
> O, many a cup of this forbidden wine
> Must drown the memory of this insolence.

But the Master Faculty is within the reach of all. We may simply and consistently approach God, believe in Him, and trust Him, in finding what we are to do, and what part we are to play in the great scheme. We may ask and receive His guidance in every step we take, and draw upon His ever ready strength for every task enjoined upon us. We may, however humble our sphere or limited our opportunity, utter the syllable which He meant us to utter, be a note, however subordinate, in the instrument on which He is rolling out His diapason.

CHAPTER III

THE BOOK

"If anything in the Bible is not true, how can we know what in it *is* true?" That is the perplexed and very legitimate question which is frequently asked to-day. Can a simple and satisfactory answer be given? Beyond all doubt it can. But before the answer is given let us fully appreciate the origin and reason of the question, and the complete reasonableness of putting it.

The infallibility of the Bible was a dogma, like the infallibility of the Pope, which was invented in order to provide a direct authority to settle all doubts, to establish all truth. So long as the infallibility of the Church remained unquestioned, the infallibility of the Bible did not so much matter. The Church maintained theoretically the authority of Holy Scripture, but practically selected from Scripture only what she chose, added to it or disregarded it, and always claimed the right of determining its meaning. The living Church, the *Ecclesia Docens*, overrode the Bible, just as Swedenborg, or Mrs. Eddy, or Mrs. Besant overrides it, by giving it an arbitrary interpretation, and reading into it what is required.

But when the infallibility of the Church was ques-

tioned, and the Reformers ventured to repudiate the Pope, there was a demand for a new infallibility, and it was found in the dogma, expressed in Gaussen's *Théopneustia*, that the Canon of Scripture, exclusive of the Apocrypha, and as delivered in the *Textus Receptus*, whatever it might be, was the actual writing of the Holy Ghost, and as such was not only the infallible guide for doctrine and conduct, but also a miraculous writing from beginning to end, in which everything was necessarily true, because it was the Word of God, and there could be no conceivable error because it was the writing of God. This dogma was assumed, and was not to be questioned.

Just as before the Reformation the formula was: *Roma locuta est, causa finita*, so after the Reformation for nearly four centuries everything was settled by a quotation from Scripture; there God had spoken and the matter was settled. This appeared to bring into religion a great simplicity and directness. And there is little wonder that a multitude of Protestants still cling to the dogma, because it seems to afford them a sure foothold, and a strong defence against the errors of Rome as well as against the evil practices of men. The stout assertion: "I believe everything from Genesis to Revelation, every comma is correct, every statement is literally true, everything taught is God's teaching," gives a great sense of strength. The man who throws out the defiant challenge feels that his position is impregnable. Joyously he asserts: "I believe that the whale swallowed Jonah, because if I didn't I couldn't believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

I believe the teaching of Ecclesiastes, and that the preacher was King Solomon, because if I didn't I couldn't believe the Sermon on the Mount. I believe that God ordered the extermination of the Canaanites, and approved of David torturing his enemies under saws and harrows (2 Sam. xii. 31), because if I didn't I could not believe St. Paul's ode to love in 1 Cor. xiii."

This heroic determination to maintain a preconceived theory of Scripture, in order to secure a sure foothold, and to offer definite teaching, is as commendable as the Catholic determination to accept the infallibility of the Pope. Infallibility is necessary for our fallible minds; failing infallibility in the vicegerent of God we must have it in the Book, written by God Himself. If anyone questions the infallibility, let him be anathema, for everything depends upon it. If that foundation is shaken the building totters down. But man's imperious demand for an infallibility does not produce it. And if he insists on infallibility at the expense of truth, he winds about him coils of error which may at any moment become constricted and prove his spiritual undoing.

Now there are two things which have become more and more certain as our knowledge has grown, and as patient scholarship has made clear the nature and bearing of the books which make up the Bible. The first thing is the overwhelming spiritual value of that unique literature, a value so obvious, so demonstrated in experience, so potent in ascertained results, that it is legitimate, nay necessary, to call the Bible God's Book, and to study it, and to search it, as such, to

find out the truth of God, the full revelation of God, the way of our salvation, and the law of our life. This the Reformers saw and expounded in the copious volumes of Puritan and Lutheran literature. The other thing the Reformers did not see, though their descendants, using the freedom which the Reformers won, have in the scholarly work of the last hundred years, made as plain as the first; that is, that the literature in which the priceless treasure is conveyed, is not infallible, makes no claim to infallibility, but shows throughout the infirmities and inconsistencies, the limitations, the progressiveness of thought and truth, which writings are bound to show.

If the Bible claimed for itself infallibility we should indeed be in a strait; for the demonstration that it is not infallible is forced upon us by all candid and serious study. But we are not in a strait just because none of the many writers claim infallibility, unless it be the writer of the Apocalypse. And that book, perhaps for that reason, had difficulty in finding a place in the Canon of Scripture. No, we are not in a strait, because the claim of infallibility is not made by the Bible, but is only made for the Bible by those who mistakenly think that only so the Truth of God can be secured. The fulminations of infallibilities, and of infallibilists, do not affect the modern, as they did the medieval, mind. Truth for us is infallible when it is found; we accept it and bow to it; but we do not find it by an *à priori* dogma of infallibility. We do not hasten its discovery by saying that the Pope is infallible or that the Bible is infallible.

Indeed, we may say that the Bible, if we may personify it, takes the utmost pains to disclaim infallibility, and to prevent us from resting in a slavish literalism. All through it acts on the principle: The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life. Again and again its narratives are duplicated, and the duplicates do not agree; the story of Creation is duplicated in the two opening chapters of the book; the history of the Kings is duplicated in Chronicles, and the differences are many and great, in details and in general tone. The Gospel Narrative itself is duplicated in the Synoptists and the Fourth Gospel, and in the Fourth Gospel there is a clear intention to correct some statements in the three earlier Gospels. Moreover the moral and religious teaching of the Bible is plainly progressive. The later repeals the earlier. The views of God at the beginning are not what they are at the end. In the Old Testament the idea of God is at first crude. He is a national God, sternly ordering the destruction of other nations, giving sanction to the barbarous methods of primitive warfare; the man after His own heart, David, is by no means free from the deceit and cunning, the ruthlessness, the vicious passions, which at the time passed without censure in a king. The Law given by God is far from being a final revelation of religious or moral truth. It was transitory and passed away. That the record of this development is correct and valuable we may gladly recognize, but that its stages and incidents are God's word or God's doing we cannot recognize, without dishonouring that God whom Christ taught us to know as Father.

And while the history and religious teaching of the Book are in so many ways tentative and provisional, and therefore only in a relative sense may we describe them as the word of God, the scientific views of the Bible are always those of the time, that is to say of a time before Science, as we know it, had begun its marvellous career. Infallibility is therefore an unsuitable designation of a literature which shows in so many ways the marks which are common to human writing and the transmission of human documents.

And yet while we are bound to surrender the mistaken claim of Infallibility we cannot lay too great stress on the unique value of this Book written by human hands, coming through human minds, but God's Book, a revelation of God, without which we should be at a loss to know Him, to find Him, to come into personal relations with Him.

Sir James Frazer, writing on the *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, and showing its relation to the folk-lore found in all peoples and religions, yet pays a remarkable tribute to the unique value of that Hebrew Bible :

" The scope of my work," he writes in the preface, " has obliged me to dwell chiefly on the lower side of ancient Hebrew life revealed in the Old Testament, on the traces of savagery and superstition which are to be found in its pages. But to do so is not to ignore, far less to disparage, that higher side of the Hebrew genius which has manifested itself in a spiritual religion and a pure morality, and of which the Old Testament is the imperishable monument. On the contrary, the revelation of the baser elements which underlay the

civilization of ancient Israel, as they underlie the civilization of modern Europe, serves rather as a foil to enhance by contrast the glory of a people which, from such dark depths of ignorance and cruelty, could rise to such bright heights of wisdom and virtue, as sunbeams appear to shine with a greater effulgence of beauty when they break through the murky clouds of a winter evening than when they flood the earth from the serene splendour of a summer noon. The annals of savagery and superstition unhappily compose a large part of human literature ; but in what other volume shall we find, side by side with that melancholy record, psalmists who poured forth their sweet and solemn strains of meditative piety in the solitude of the hills or in green pastures and beside still waters ; prophets who lit up their beatific visions of a blissful future with the glow of an impassioned imagination ; historians who bequeathed to distant ages the scenes of a remote past embalmed for ever in the amber of a pellucid style ? These are the true glories of the Old Testament and of Israel ; these we trust and believe will live to delight and inspire mankind when the crudities recorded alike in sacred and profane literature shall have been purged away in a nobler humanity of the future." [1]

This judgment of a great scholar and a great writer shows how the Old Testament, apart from the spurious claim for infallibility, must ever command the attention and study of men. And as for the New Testament,

[1] *Folk-lore in the Old Testament*, by Sir James George Frazer (Macmillan & Co.).

the surrender of that unsupported claim for infallibility can never lessen, and may indeed enormously strengthen, the appeal which it makes to any unprejudiced reader. Its effect is not produced by the dogma that the evangelists wrote under a guarantee that they should make no mistakes, or that Peter and Paul and John wrote their letters at the dictation of God, a suggestion which there is nothing to support and much to disprove, or that the history of the *Acts* instead of being good history is a miraculous record, written by the Holy Spirit, using the pen in a human hand, or that the Apocalypse is a faultless composition written in pure Greek, and delivered to the writer by supernatural means. The New Testament affects us, and affects every nation in turn, as the translation first reaches it, entirely by the contents and the teaching of the several writings. Jesus Christ comes before the reader's mind in the Four Gospels. His character and acts and words make an overwhelming impression. His cross rivets the attention and stirs the depths of the soul. The preaching of Jesus and the Resurrection to that great Roman world forms a tale of breathless interest. The writings of the apostles show the faith in Jesus coming into action and forming the Church. And throughout, the appearance and working of Christ produces such a new moral life and awakes such a bright religious hope that the reader is hardly conscious of discrepancies, or survivals of older religious ideas, or the intrusion of contemporary beliefs which have now passed entirely away.

Thus the Bible asks to be read, and is read, not

because it claims to be faultlessly correct as history, or science, or religion, but because of its actual contents, its indubitable teaching, its unmistakable revelation of God.

The dogma of infallibility, though it has superficial conveniences, has also its grave difficulties, and has produced stumbling blocks over which many have fallen. To take a somewhat extreme instance. In Exodus iv. 24 there is a staggering statement, when Moses had been commissioned in Mount Horeb to deliver his people from Pharaoh, and had started on his journey to fulfil his task, that by the way in the inn " The Lord met him and sought to kill him," and only by Zipporah circumcizing her son was this attempt of God to slay His servant averted. The dogma requires us to believe that this is true, recorded by God Himself. The dogma would require acquiescence in the notion that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in earlier days would kill his appointed messenger, because he had omitted up to that time to circumcize his child.

It certainly is not weakening, but strengthening, faith, when Rudolf Otto shows us how the idea of the mysterious and unknown, to which he gives the name of the Numinous, lies at the back of all religions ; and how in such an episode as this we have that dread of the unknown, that conception of a malignant power causing disease and death, punishing men for involuntary transgressions of unknown taboos, appearing in connection with the Prophet who was receiving the revelation of God as *I am*.

The Bible treated in the right way is full of instruction, of warning, of guidance and help. But when we impose upon it the dogma of infallibility, and treat all it says as the Word of God, we make it as misleading as it is helpful, the support of errors and superstitions, wrong ideas of God, and a cause of human action, which must be utterly repugnant to Him, the light of the knowledge of whose glory we have seen on the face of Christ Jesus.

Is not the mistake of the fundamentalists, that, starting from the truth "As for God His work is perfect," they unconsciously lay down the standard of perfection which they would demand for their own convenience? What they want is a book which gives God's words plainly and unmistakably, with no room for error. As the Bible is God's work it must have that characteristic. But if it has not that characteristic, that does not show it is not God's work, and not in His sense perfect for the purpose in view. The planets must move in circles, because we consider a circle is the perfect figure. There cannot be spots in the sun, for to us a spotless sun alone is perfect. The fallacy is obvious, though how to avoid it may be difficult.

But the question waits to be answered: If the Bible is not, as Calvin taught, infallible; if its statements are often unscientific; if its narratives are subject to the same uncertainties as even the best history betrays; if the idea of God in it is not always the same, but progressive, working to a culmination in Christ; if there are in it standards and ideas which were super-

seded in the moral growth of the human spirit ; if in a word the Truth of the Bible makes its way to us through a long development which covered at least a thousand years, and in a historical setting which shows undisguisedly the ignorance and the wickedness, the superstition and the irreligion of the people through whom the growing truth came, how are we to know what is true in it ? If the story of Adam and Eve is allegorical, why not the story of the Second Adam and of Redemption ? If the story of the Exodus and of the Tabernacle in the wilderness is an idealized account of the origin of Israel's Yahweh-religion and of his settlement in Canaan, how can I believe the Life of Jesus, and the account of the new religion penetrating the world in the *Acts of the Apostles* ? If the Imprecatory Psalms are not divinely inspired, why is " The Lord is my Shepherd," or " Lord, thou has searched me and known me " inspired ? If there are prophecies in Isaiah and Jeremiah which were not and cannot now be fulfilled, of what value are the prophecies of the Messiah ? If the expectation of Christ's speedy return was falsified, what value can be attached to prophecies of the future in the Apocalypse ?

How can we tell what *is* true ? Of what use to us is a book which is not verbally inspired, and delivered to us with the guarantee that everything is absolutely correct and unimpeachable ?

The question sounds complicated, perplexing, unanswerable. And yet, the answer is not far to seek, or doubtful, if it be true that God never leaves Himself without a witness If God did leave Himself without

a witness, we should stumble into many errors, we should miss the way, but at least we should not be culpable.

The answer is surprisingly simple. How am I to know what is true in the Bible, if there is in the Bible anything that is not true? The answer is by the Master Faculty, by faith. But an immediate explanation must be given, because faith is a term much abused. The faith that comes to our aid is not the belief that the Bible as such is God's word, and is necessarily true from beginning to end. That belief is credulity, even superstition, and has led and will always lead to confusion, to a warped religion, and ultimately as in so great a part of Protestantism, to irreligion. The faith that comes to our aid, the Master Faculty by which we know what is true in the Bible, and recognize it as the truest truth we know, is that direct confidence in the Power and Purpose that we humbly and diffidently name God, which assures us that Truth is its own revelation. The faith which interprets the Bible is the certainty that God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, the Spirit within, the Unction of the Holy One, which leads us into all truth.

This Faith, as we saw in other connections, is a strong and active principle by which we lay hold of the living God, and receive the revelation which He makes of Himself, whether in the Bible, or in Nature, or in human life. Without this faith, the Book is to us a dead letter, if not a perplexing enigma. But with this faith the Book becomes luminous and living.

The errors, the obscurities, the uncertain text, the disordered arrangement, all the other drawbacks of a literature transmitted for ages through human hands and human minds, are quite negligible. The character of the writing, whether history or fable, whether testimony of eye-witnesses, or legend of a remote past, whether poetry or prose, whether human reasoning and research, or divine inspiration, whether man's struggle after truth and righteousness or God's revelation of Truth and Righteousness in Christ, all this becomes very clear.

Just as we do not miss the genius and beauty of Shakespeare because the text is often uncertain and doubtfully supplied, or because the sources of the plots are not the invention of the poet, or because some plays and some parts of plays are probably not Shakespeare's at all; so, using the Master Faculty we find the Bible is God's Book, and through the Book we find Him, although there is much in it which is not God's Word, but man's, although much that science has made the common property of the modern mind was not known when it was written, although there are moral standards and practices and precepts which no longer apply to us, but only show us the stages through which man passed in his ascent to Christ.

But there are certain characteristics of the Bible as a whole, which, apart from the manifest revelation and moral teaching which form its main feature, justify us in speaking of it—yes, the canon as it comes, surely not by accident, to us—as *inspired*. That is, there is a divine breath breathing through it. There is

a continuity and a unity, which, considering the long centuries of its production and the variety of the writers, can certainly not be explained, except by saying that "God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets and then at last spake to all men by His Son."

For one thing it is very noticeable that the characters delineated in the whole Bible are, like the creations of Shakespeare, universal. Of many times and of many kinds, they are yet essentially just the people we know still. There are few, if any, sides of human nature which are not here presented, and in a way calculated to guide or to warn the reader. The Bible characters seem never to be exhausted. The earliest of them are quite modern, the best of them are the best the world has seen; the worst of them touch the depths. There is no avowed or apparent design to give this complete analysis, and full illustration, of man as man; but there it is, produced as it were by consummate genius. Again, the events and narratives of the Bible lend themselves to a spiritual interpretation; it is easy, and sometimes inevitable, to allegorize them. The highest truths of religion are anticipated, as it were on a lower scale, or in more limited issues; but the same principle seems to underlie the earlier incidents which afterwards comes to a higher expression. It is as if Truth first clothes itself in very simple and earthly categories, and challenges later ages to find suitable categories for it. Everything seems to prophesy and to foreshadow. Earthly terms are used which easily

suggest higher and heavenly ideas. Nature seems always trembling into super-nature, human into divine.

The Exodus reads like an allegory of life. The exile and the return seem to have a wider bearing. The simple story of Jesus rises into an explanation of life and death, of God and man, of heaven and earth.

Thus the Bible is a supreme lesson book for humanity. It is more useful than an encyclopædia or a great dictionary. It contains or suggests everything. It anticipates all discoveries, and as new truths emerge in human progress, we are surprised to find them already prognosticated in the Bible.

Another characteristic is very significant. All through the Book there are phrases and sentences which, even taken out of their context, shine as jewels, they pass into the universal speech of men, they become seeds of thought, texts for sermons. There is no book of the Bible which has not contributed one or more of these jewels. Some parts of the Bible seem made up of them. Pope's "Essay on Man" has been so much quoted that a young reader of a later time supposed that it was made up of familiar quotations ingeniously strung together. The Bible is largely made up of quotations; its language has passed into the common speech and is on the tongues of those who do not know whence it comes.

We are entitled then to speak of the whole Book as inspired, not because everything in it is inspired, but because it has certain qualities, peculiar in their range and combination to itself; certain qualities which defy

any other explanation than this, that the Power and Purpose that produced the world and man, produced this Book, and put it into the hand of man, that by diligent study and thought man might find out God, and be instructed in His ways.

But while we recognize this as God's Book in a special and unique sense, and by the Master Faculty are able to use it and to apply it better in each succeeding age, it is not God's only Book. Nature is also God's Book. If God gave man the Bible, God in just the same way gave him this other Book ; late and slowly does man learn to read it ; at first he thinks the Book of Nature contradicts his Bible ; and the searchers into Nature are thought to be enemies to religion. But such a contradiction is impossible. The Scribes and the scholars of the Bible must ultimately agree with the scientific investigators and explorers who are the scribes and scholars of Nature. To faith the revelation of Nature is God's revelation too ; to Christ it was all a parable ; He could convey all truth by talking of the seed, and the fruit tree, and the sky, and the many splendoured aspects of the world His Father made. But more of this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE OF NATURE

PROFESSOR ARTHUR THOMSON entitled his Bross Lecture of 1907 *The Bible of Nature.* Since then, under his direction, has been published *The Outline of Science,* to which the leading men of science have contributed. And this fascinating work is the Bible of Nature, written out so far as pure science is able to write it, and so far as scientific inquiry has up to the present reached. Here we see in a very condensed form, the universe, the starry distances, the invisible atoms, the development of life from its lowly beginning to man, and man himself, how he came to be, what he has become, his life, his knowledge, his hopes.

This is God's Book just as truly as the Bible is. "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all." This Bible is even more wonderful than the other, if for this reason only that it includes the other. For, as Professor Thomson, and most men in the front rank of science to-day see, man is part of Nature's handiwork, and not a sub ordinate part, nay, without presumption we may say, the consummate part. For in man Nature becomes consciousness, and thought, and the power to under-

stand herself. And when man begins to examine the system to which he belongs and recognizes its evolutionary character, he sees that the moral principle which is in himself has been working in the whole process. Geddes describes Nature as a materialized ethical process. The world is the abode of the strong, but it is also the home of the loving. As Professor Drummond used to say, there is a struggle for existence, but also a struggle for the life of others. And the Bible of Nature is unified and intelligent by the moral life in which it culminates. The Bible of Nature is as religious as the other Bible is. It shows us in the records of the first human life on the planet the indications of religion-offerings to the unseen Power, belief in survival after death. It has chapters which display the irreligion of man, his superstitions, his idolatries, his moral corruption, his vices, his atheism. But the Bible of Nature is quite emphatic in showing that man as man is not only a moral being, with ideas of right and wrong, but also a religious being, with ideas of himself and Another—always Another, known or not known, misunderstood or better understood. The Bible of Nature shows that Other, the Maker of Heaven and Earth. If it says nothing else about God, it at least declares a Power and a Purpose equal to the production of that scheme of things in which man finds himself, the knowing and inquiring and reasoning element.

At first scientific inquirers claim a monopoly of the Bible of Nature, and delight to show how it contradicts that other Bible. The defenders of that other Bible

retaliate, and shut their eyes to the Bible of Nature, banning those inquirers as infidels and atheists. This belated and irrational controversy still goes on in the more backward parts of human life, where it is held to be a main point, and even the foundation stone of religion, to maintain the Creation story of Genesis against all the discoveries of science.

But the intelligence of to-day accepts the two Bibles, and knows that they come from the same Author. They have to be reconciled, not pitted against one another. The older cannot ban or exclude the newer, on the contrary it has to accept the corrections of the newer. God speaks through both, and if He spoke first through a book which could show man his place in Nature and his duty to God, He speaks also in the extension of science, the unfolding of the Book of Nature. The various world is His utterance, and by it He brings His Book up to date.

Thus the Master Faculty, Faith, is needed for understanding this later, as for understanding the earlier Bible. Men who have not faith cannot understand the Bible of Nature. Science cannot understand it, until science consents to use the aid of faith. To science without faith the Bible of Nature is a sealed book.

Professor Ray Lankester, whose right to speak for science no one will question, says : " The whole order of nature, including living and lifeless matter, from man to gas, is a network of mechanism, the main features and many details of which have been made more or less obvious to the wondering intelligence of

mankind by the labour and ingenuity of scientific investigators. But no sane man has ever pretended, since science became a definite body of doctrine, that we know or ever can hope to know or conceive of the possibility of knowing whence this mechanism has come, why it is there, whither it is going, and what there may or may not be beyond and beside it which our senses are incapable of appreciating. These things are not explained by science and never can be." The origin, the purpose, the goal, science cannot tell, nor ever will be able to tell. Admirable is the modesty of science, but not so admirable is its conclusion. For we, being men, with a consciousness of life, shadowed by death, and knowing that all our acts are purposive, and ought to be nobly purposive, require to know concerning the network of mechanism, of which we form a part, the origin, the purpose and the goal. So necessary is this knowledge for us, that failing it the knowledge which science offers to us becomes a mockery, a despair.

But what science cannot tell because it does not know, another faculty knows and can tell. The Master Faculty is that which supplies the necessary knowledge, the knowledge which redeems scientific knowledge from its futility. The scientific investigator may be, often is, without the use of the Master Faculty; the encyclopædists were. Haeckel appeared to be. And among ourselves we have had great and devoted investigators whose Master Faculty was atrophied. None the less, it is that faculty in others which gives to scientific discoveries their real value. By faith we

understand "in the beginning God created," if by science we gradually learn the age-long process of that creation. By faith we know that the whole creation groans and travails towards the manifestation of the sons of God; though science can only tell us the less important fact of our descent from lower organisms. By faith we are assured of a splendid result to the drama of life—a result which the senses cannot apprehend, a result which will entirely justify the long and toilsome process; though science can only foresee the return of the ice-age which will sweep away the results of civilized history, or a conflagration in which the whole planet and all which it inhabit will pass away like the baseless fabric of a dream.

Science can spell out the letters, words and sentences of the Book of Nature. But only faith can read it, make it intelligible, or show that it leads to anything of worth. But when this Master Faculty is called in, especially by a scientific man, who has mastered what science can give, the Bible of Nature is rich in revelation, it is not only fact but poetry: it has its prophecies and apocalypses.

The beauty of Nature is an overwhelming revelation and carries home a truth which may touch the reason, but does not come from it. The scientific explanation of the sunrise or the sunset, of the rainbow or of a thunderstorm, is a very small part of the effect which these things have upon us. Dawn and evening spoke to men before men had the faintest idea of their cause: myths invented causes which partly explained the effect. But our fullest scientific knowledge still leaves

us those mysterious effects and suggestions of other modes of being and other life than ours, which men have always experienced in the fresh beauty of a new day, and in the calm splendour of the sinking sun. As Burne-Jones said in his beautiful way, "The rainbow is God's bow set in the clouds—it may have other explanations." Certainly its significance for man in all recorded time is that it suggests hope and promise. And the storm which has awed man from the beginning of time works on the imagination and even on the nerves, as a manifestation of the Numinous, quite apart from the explanation which exact science can give of the lightnings that lighten the world and the reverberations which shake the sky.

Then there is the parabolic meaning of Nature, with which science does not concern itself, but which probably strikes the scientific man as it does everyone else. When Jesus was among us He read a parable in everything and drove the thought of man in the direction of taking Nature as a system of significant symbols. To Him the sowing of the seed meant the dissemination of the Word: the harvest meant the final results of the world's life; the fish in the lake were the symbol of man's crowding life, and the fishing was the symbol of winning men to God. The sheep following the shepherd, and folded at night, or the shepherd going into the wild to find a sheep that was lost, were speaking symbols of His own relation to men. If no one ever equalled Him in reading the Bible of Nature as symbolic teaching from God, from His day until now we have read the Book with His eyes.

Nature teems with parables. The poet watches the waterfowl flying home in the evening light, and he feels the guiding power of God over his own life. Mrs. Gatty sees the dragon-fly emerge from the worm in the depths of the pond, and expand his gauze wings in the sunlit air; and she recognizes in it the emancipation of the soul when it leaves behind in death the "muddy vesture of decay."

Just as we saw in the Bible the curious fact that its narratives and personalities seemed always susceptible of a larger and spiritual interpretation, and inferred from that the inspiration of the Bible, so we cannot but recognize the inspiration of the Bible of Nature in the spiritual teaching which lies to hand in almost all its pages. And just as in the Book of Nature there are things hard to be understood, the ravin and preying, the hideous and repulsive organisms, the terrors of volcanoes, tornadoes and inundations, so in the Bible there are problems, moral and intellectual, which defy our solution; we have to lay down the Book, fold our hands, and trust. As Bishop Butler would say, the analogy is very close, the two Books confirm each other, and show that they come from the same Author.

One of the most illuminating suggestions of Professor Thomson occurs in his *Bible of Nature*, p. 88.

It is one of those inspired words which reconcile contradictions, and at a touch unify thought and knowledge: "Do we mean that from such a beginning the whole earth with all its beauty and order has grown without direction from without? That is what

science seems to say, that the direction is from within, that the Cosmos was already in the nebula, that there never was any chaos at all, that there is nothing in the end which was not also in the beginning. And if you like to add: In the beginning was the Logos, science has no word to say against it."

It is very curious to see science welcoming the Logos just when certain theologians are dismissing the idea as disturbing and unnecessary. It means that probably in the future science will corroborate and enlarge our theology; if it corrects, it will also improve. Faith and science will one day kiss one another. Here is the promise of it. The Logos is the personal intelligence implied in the existence of an intelligible world. Science is only possible because the Cosmos is the work of intelligence. The constancy, the order, the development of things, are what constitute the postulates of science. Only because in Nature there are uniformities which can be reckoned on, that nothing comes by chance, but all is in order, that development advances on principle, can we construct sciences or believe in Science. But that regularity and constancy, excluding chance and disorder and purposelessness, cannot spring from chance. There is a deep, underlying, ever-active Reason, which accounts for a Cosmos and a progressive development. Evolution is a mere term, which might as well be designated by x, until that Reason which directs it is recognized. That Reason is the Logos. Through the Logos the worlds were made, and without the Logos nothing that is was made. And it is not difficult to see that however

important it is to know the things that are made, it is intrinsically more important to know how and why they were made, and who made them. For that they made themselves, or happened by chance, is not to any sane mind remotely conceivable. Science may step without its province when it allows that in the beginning was the Logos. But the step is a necessary one.

It is the work of our time, which is proceeding with great steadiness and rapidity, not so much to reconcile religion and science—that is no longer a living issue—but to bring into their right relation the two Bibles. Both the Bibles are getting to be better understood. If the older is somewhat neglected because of the unceasing advances in the knowledge of the newer, discerning eyes see that the older is gaining from the progress of the newer, gaining in vastness of outlook, gaining in richness of contents, gaining in the splendour of the end in view. The old Bible begins already to be read with a far deeper interest as it is read in parallel columns with the new.

The Bible of Nature is a stupendous commentary on the written Bible. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" is a mighty saying, which at once marks the Bible off from all other cosmogonies and makes the account of Creation *truer* in every sense than any account of beginnings ever conceived by men. But when the Bible of Nature has given us a notion of what "The Heaven and the Earth" really are, what is meant by "created" and what the Being must be who created them, the wonder grows, and the mind bows down in religious awe. "The heavens

declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork" meant much when man looked up into the starry vault, and gave his fanciful names to the constellations; the star-besprinkled sky through which the sun made his daily journey, and in which the moon waxed and waned, was in any case a grander dome than man himself could ever build. But what are the heaven and the earth, when with the aid of telescope and spectroscope we have learnt to calculate the size, the distances, the composition of those myriads of twinkling stars. The sun is ninety-three and a half millions of miles away from us, and his light takes eight minutes to reach us. But Betelgeuse, the star which forms the left shoulder of Orion, has a diameter which is nearly three times as great as that distance of the sun from the earth. And travelling at that rate of 93 millions of miles in eight minutes, light would take 50,000 years to travel from the one side to the other of the flaming ramparts of the universe which we gaze on in the night sky. And what does creation mean when we are speaking of this scheme of things, which may well be called infinite, because we cannot conceive its limits or its *finis*? It was wonderful to say that creation sprang into being by a word, but much more wonderful to see the process by which that word worked. For we see suns forming out of nebulæ, and burning out in the infinite depths of space. And we know that Creation means Creative Evolution, an unimaginable power producing systems, and maintaining them in such stability, in spite of ceaseless revolutions, that Orion retains the same appearance

of the hunter as he did when primitive man first gave him a name. But the Being, the Logos, that produced the heaven and the earth, as we now know them, their heights and depths, their lights and darkness, their movements and the details of each globe in the galaxy, what manner of Being is this, to whom we give the name God? Who by searching can find Him out?

But if He baffles thought in the direction of the infinite, equally does He baffle thought in the direction of the infinitesimal. The living forms which crowd air and earth and sea, all maintained millennium after millennium—(on an Egyptian tomb, three thousand years old, is a painting of birds, the shrike, the spoonbill, the hoopoe, the duck, just as we know them now)—exquisitely constructed and adapted, each for its own surroundings, most of them of indescribable beauty, even the smallest and most repulsive insects, all of them miracles of ingenuity, so minute that a pinch of mud from the ooze of a river-bed may appear under the microscope as a crowd of shells, each the home of a living mollusc—the Being that produced the starry systems produced and continues all these. Nor does wonder cease there. We go down to that which no microscope can reveal to our sight, just as in thought we go to systems beyond the range of the telescope, and the *atom*, which we can never see, the ultimate constituent of all matter, proves to be a complete system, like that of the sun, in which the ions of electricity are careering round with inconceivable velocity, so that if we could release and apply the force in an atom, we could move mountains.

The Power that is God made and maintains the whole of this infinite, infinitesimal system revealed in the Bible of Nature. And if we are inclined to say in awe and dismay: What is man that Thou art mindful of him? the answer comes at once: Man is a being somewhere about midway in the scale of creation, who has this peculiarity that he can come into a conscious relation with the Creator, and must be so far the peculiar object of the Creator's interest and love as he is capable of this communion and mutual understanding. In a word, the God revealed in the Bible of Nature, is so unlike the limited, finite, anthropomorphic god that sometimes seems to be implied in the stories of the Old Testament, the god whom early painters represented as a grey-bearded man holding in his arms the crucified Son, while the white dove of the Holy Ghost hung between them, He is so much vaster in size and power and intricate adaptability to everything great and small that He has made, that we cannot doubt His power and readiness to care for each of us, to hear and to understand and answer, when we speak to Him. Frank Buckland, the naturalist, who was put at the head of the fisheries, died with great serenity, because, he said, God who took such care of all the little fishes, would certainly not forget the keeper of the fishes. Science is infinitely reassuring in showing the wisdom and efficiency, the care and the foresight which are everywhere manifest; and faith tells us that this is God.

But there is a point which Professor Thomson does not venture to make, a point which the Fourth Gospel

makes with simple confidence, it is "The Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us." This is the most surprising revelation made in the written Word. It is entirely confirmed by certain passages in St. Paul. Science did not discover this, and is very shy in recognizing it. Not only so, but even strong believers, like Dr. Glover in *The Jesus of History*, regard the matter as incidental and unimportant. But this truth is so illuminating and brings such coherence and unity to all our conceptions, and is moreover so sure, when the Master Faculty comes into play, that it is a great calamity to lose it or to slur it over.

The Bible of Nature is open before us—the highest thing in it is the moral and spiritual life of man. But whence comes this noblest product of nature, and to what does it point? Is it something different from the creative-evolution which has produced and maintains all things? Is it something alien, introduced from without? Such a notion shatters any conception of unity. But take it to be the proper result of the Logos which is working, and making and directing all things. Take it that man, a moral and spiritual being, is the product of that Logos lighted by him on coming into the world, receiving life from him throughout. Such a thought was not unknown to Plato and the neoplatonists, perhaps it was what Anaxagoras meant when he spoke of Nous governing all things. Such a thought finds a new expression in Eucken's conception of the spiritual and in Bergson's activism. But here comes the crowning fact. Man is always akin to the Logos, and produced by him; produced by the very

power which made the worlds, the creative power that has been at work from the beginning. But this is an abstraction, a process of reasoning, a philosophy until the greatest wonder that has ever happened or can happen, occurs. The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us. Allow this simple statement to exert its due influence on the mind; let the Master Faculty of Faith receive it and assimilate it; and see how it lights up man and God and the universe, gives to life its meaning, and explains the whole Bible of Nature, which else might seem too varied and variable to have a distinct meaning. If the Logos became flesh the state of man is raised to a level on which he may be the son of God, and God becomes a Being who despite His infinitude can be in the relation of Father. If the Logos became flesh the universe becomes intelligible to us men. We are related to its creative principle; we are at one with it; we are in the secret. Our scientific investigations and our thought are not approaching it from without, but from within. Our knowledge of it all is an ever-enlarging self-consciousness; we grow into it, it enters into us. If the Logos became flesh, human life has not only a profound but a lasting significance. The life may be short, it may cease in childhood, it may be long, and may fade into the decay of old age; but this human life which the Logos has assumed is too intimately related with God and eternity to perish. In the illimitable universe there is room for all—in the house are many mansions—they who have worn the flesh which the Logos became, cannot perish. They can only cease to be, if the wisdom and

love that govern the universe discern that for them being has become worse than non-being. The Logos that is the life of men can, and in mercy may, withdraw life from individuals. But apart from a special providence decreeing annihilation, the soul is eternal. The creative fiat will not lightly annihilate. It is this incarnation of the Logos which gives to human nature its dignity, and forbids us to think meanly of any human being, even though that human being is ourself. In this way the Master Faculty makes men precious in our sight, and gives to the service of humanity the dignity which no other service can give.

And thus the truth that the Logos became flesh lights up and gives the full meaning to the Bible of Nature, which otherwise might seem knowable in part, but never really intelligible. That Bible is relative to us as men ; it is we that have to read and study it ; in that study no other creatures known to us have a share. *Ἄνθρωπος μέτρον* said the wise man of Greece. "Man is the measure." Nature can only be what it is for us as men. The only interpretation of it therefore that can ever bring us any illumination, any satisfaction, is that it is produced by the Intelligence, which finds its richest expression among things created in man. If the Logos had refrained from becoming flesh, had not included such incarnation in the plan of His creation, we should have remained for ever outsiders, interested, straining after a closer union, a clearer understanding, but yet only intelligences essentially separated from the One Intelligence. But with this clue, this conception of what the whole

creation is straining after, the Bible of Nature is full of meaning. Every creature in the various world seems in its place on the ladder of ascent giving some hint or suggestion of what the highest will be. Every force at work in the world—light, heat, electricity, motion—hints at spiritual suggestions. The ether, all pervading, invisible, and yet the condition of all the operation of all the forces, is a symbol of the Omnipresent God.

If science then allowed us to say: In the beginning was the Logos, and in a sense required us to say it, under penalty of all her findings being a mockery to us, Faith permitted us to say: The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us. And this lighted up the whole Bible of Nature with a rich and eternal meaning. Thus the Bible repays to the Bible of Nature a debt. The two revelations coalesce, as soul and body coalesce. God gives both to men: using both, man becomes at one with God.

CHAPTER V

SALVATION BY FAITH

The faculty of faith which gives us the truth of the Word made Flesh is the same faculty by which we receive salvation Salvation is summed up as forgiveness of our sins, cleansing from sin, and that new spiritual nature which Christ described as being "born again." This salvation is made ours by faith.

The term justification by faith requires a good deal of refurbishing; like a coin which has been long in circulation, its image and superscription are defaced. Twice at least it came out gleaming from the mint of God, and literally changed the world; once when to Paul it was the deliverance from the bondage of the Jewish Law, and the expression of a rich spiritual transformation which made him the apostle of Christ; and again when to Luther, wearied out with his attempt to obtain pardon and peace by self-inflicted austerities, it came like the voice of the morning, a veritable revelation from heaven.

But when this flaming truth cooled down and solidified into a dogma, it easily lost its value, became perverted, and misled foolish and ignorant men into antinomianism, and the "wretchlessness of unclean living." Some even have been heard to say that

they need not trouble to give up sin, because they are justified by faith and not by works. Against such an abuse the Epistle of James, though it was to Luther a "letter of straw," because it seemed to dispute his cardinal doctrine of justification by faith alone, must be brought out and enforced. But better than pitting St. James against St. Paul, and showing that works are necessary, or faith will be vain, is the clear vision which sees what the words "justification" and "faith" really mean in the great experience of St. Paul. When the terms are understood as Paul and Luther understood them, there is no fear of a conflict between faith and works; for the faith spoken of is always a "faith which worketh"—yes, a "faith which worketh by love."

This faith which justifies is not the mere mental act of taking a statement on trust, without proof, which is the attenuated meaning of the word in controversy, but that faculty of which we are speaking all along, by which we come into vital touch with God, the Power and Purpose directing all things. In that contact with the Holy Love that is God, in that communion of spirit with Spirit, the weak and erring human spirit, with the strong and holy Spirit of God, sin is shrivelled up, its stain is scoured out, its impulses are overborne by the impulse of holiness. As this vital contact with the Holy God is what St. Paul means by faith, he eagerly proclaims that sin is ruled out. Justified by such faith we cannot continue in sin; while faith rules sin disappears.

The justification, in Greek δικαιοσύνη, is the same

as righteousness in God, and goodness in man; it may have a technical legal meaning, and that is the source of the ambiguity which has often neutralized the great doctrine. To "justify" might mean to "declare innocent," to pass a verdict of acquittal, and such a verdict might be wrong; in that usage of the word, the guilty might be "justified" and yet be guilty still. But this secondary meaning of the law courts does not come into view in the great argument. Here "justified" means nothing short of "made righteous." Justification is rightness, is what we were meant to be, and ought to be—what left to ourselves we never are or can be: for there is none righteous, no not one—we are made righteous, made good, by faith. By vital union with the Holy God, by reconciliation with Him, and receiving His Spirit, we are forgiven. The former sins are put away far as the east is from the west, we are delivered from sin—it no more has dominion over us—we have received a newness of life, a power to be good and to do good. Justification by faith, to Paul, to Luther, to all who have the wonderful experience, is the sublimation of life which comes, when by the divinely given faculty we find God, and know God, commune with God, and love Him.

That this reconciliation between man and God was accomplished by Jesus Christ, and is made possible for all who believe in Him, is the Christian Gospel. He comes to us in His human birth and human life, and sacrificial death, the perfect example of one "justified by faith." For Him there is no gap between

man and God ; they are completely at one. He bears the sins, as He bears the pains, of men, not as His own, but as theirs. When in the prosecution of His healing and redeeming mission He faces death, the death inflicted by men's lawless hands, He does so because He knows that this offering of love, this self-giving of the leader of our salvation, will make it possible for every child of man to come to His Father, and to be reconciled with Him. He is the mediator between man and God ; He is the propitiation, the reconciliation, that brings men and God together. He was symbolized by the Mercy Seat in the tabernacle, which in the Septuagint is always described as the propitiatory. What He did on the cross remains always an unfathomable mystery. All Love is a mystery ; all sacrifice is a mystery ; but the mystery of the Incarnate Word offering Himself to reconcile God and Man, is the deepest mystery that the story of man on the earth contains. We know that it accomplishes the object ; but how, we do not know. We know how, ever since the cross on which He died became the symbol of a new religion, men and women have found through it the way of reconciliation to God. The faculty of faith finds God by believing in Jesus. There have been those who, like Abraham, have believed in God, and it has been counted to them for righteousness, though they have not heard of Christ and His central sacrifice for mankind. But Christ lived and died, that all men might thus know God, and come to Him, and be reconciled. Christ is the Word of God for humanity.

A close study of the words and thoughts of Jesus shows that He was always aware of what He was doing, in His holy life and in His sacrificial death, and that He was consciously lifted up to draw all men to Him.

Professor Russell Scott made in the *Expository Times* (February 1925) a close study of this kind and discovered the idea of sin which underlies our Lord's teaching: "Sin may be lawless or barren or self-willed; any one of these aspects may be prominent; but in all its forms and instances it involves a separation from the Divine Father. That to Jesus is the essence of sin and its most serious feature." He came to overcome that separation. He met men everywhere with the word of forgiveness on His lips; and was entirely unabashed when indignant Pharisees said: Who can forgive sins but God only? It was as if He allowed that; and then forgave sins. He showed to all men, as in the parable of the prodigal son, the readiness of God to receive and welcome His children who have wandered farthest from Him. He invited all to come unto Himself, because coming to Him they were coming to God. Thus He took the place once and for ever which enabled every man to come to God. Awaking in all the desire to overcome the separation between themselves and God, by showing the beauty and holiness and love of the Unseen Father, He showed all the time how the way was open, how He was the Way. He encouraged everyone as long as the world endures to come unto God by Him.

When the apostles reflected on His life, and all He had taught, and tried to understand His death in the light of the resurrection, they realized, though they never succeeded in reducing the fact to set terms, that He, all through from beginning to end, had been the mediator, that He had been Himself the reconciliation or at-one-ment, between God and men. They preached Christ as the sure way of bringing men to God. The faculty of faith reached God by way of Christ who had died for men's sins and risen for their justification.

A complaint is sometimes made that neither Paul nor any of the apostles, nor even Christ Himself, offered any formulated doctrine of the Atonement. So far as they were Jews they were content to view the sacrificial system of Judaism as the acknowledged mode of man's, or at least the Jew's, approach to God ; and they saw that Christ took the place of the whole system. In place of the lamb offered morning and evening, He was the Lamb of God which took away the sin of the world. In place of the blood of bulls and goats which could never take away sin, there was His precious blood, which could. It was enough that the imperfect and inefficacious mode of reconciliation between man and God was superseded. And there, not for Jew only but for all mankind, was the Son of God offering Himself through the eternal Spirit, the one sole and sufficient sacrifice for the sin of man. There was the justification which everyone by faith could make his own.

But for Gentiles who had not been trained in the

institutions of Judaism, there was another background, against which Christ's sacrifice appeared. There was, for instance, the august tradition of Roman law, with its penalties, its ransoms, and its legal equivalents. This naturally coloured the thought of those who were born and brought up in the Roman Empire. But neither the Jewish sacrifices, nor Roman law terms, offered any adequate forms to express what Christ had done in bearing the sin of the world, or how men could receive the benefits which He had bought. It was therefore an advantage and not a drawback that no theory or doctrine of Atonement was shaped in the Apostolic circle, which might have claimed at first to be authoritative, and then proved at last to be inadequate, a hindrance rather than a help. Indeed, all the theories shaped in the course of church history have become, in turn, not aids, but stumbling blocks, to faith.

The greatest powers at work in the life of man defy definition, and often disappear in analysis. Love, beauty, charm, personal influence, may be felt, but never really described or delineated.

It is so with the work of Christ which reconciles us to God. It does reconcile us ; it gives us pardon, peace and power. It makes us new creatures. It redeems human society and sets before men a deathless hope for this world and for a world to come. But why and how it does this baffles the understanding. There *He* is, in the Gospels, the Jesus of history ; there He is in the Church, the Christ of the ages. Because of what He was, His death acquires an

unsearchable meaning. Reaching wide arms out to us from His Cross, He draws us in and folds us to the bosom of God. It is better to accept it, and not to search too curiously. It has something in common with a work of genius—picture, poem, building, musical creation. The effect is inexplicable. What appeals to the senses, or even to the mind, cannot explain what proceeds from it and masters us.

It is not therefore a sign of imperfection that the Atonement which we find in the crucified Saviour cannot be confined to a statement or a dogma, cannot even be exhausted in a series or system of statements. It is no imperfection of life, or mind, of man's soul, or God's spirit, that it thus defies scientific analysis or statement.

The only satisfactory doctrine of the Atonement is personal and individual. You can say : I know what Christ is to me, I know what He has done for my soul. But if you want others to accept your view of it, you may be disappointed. All you can do is to get them to accept Christ for themselves, and then to state in their own terms what He is to them, and what He has done for them. There is but one Christ, one matchless life, one Cross, one Passion, one Resurrection, one Ascension. But what He has done for all and what He is to all can only be stated by the enumeration of the experiences of the countless hosts that are before His throne. The sum total of these redeeming acts would be the sufficient doctrine of the Atonement. But let us follow out in a little detail how " the justification by faith " works. Faith,

as we have defined it, the faculty by which we find God, and become one with God, cannot but work. There is a quietism of faith, a peace, an unagitated assurance that all is well and must be well; but it is only the quietism of God. The quietism of God is a never ceasing activity; and the quietism of faith is a similar activity; nay, we may say it with reverence, is the same activity. God works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. The works of faith are insisted on by the very writer who is most emphatic in saying that we are saved not by works, but by faith. Being justified by grace, we must work for God. "They which have believed God must be careful to maintain good works." The object of Christ's redemption was "to purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works" (*see* Titus iii. 8 and ii. 14). The importance of these good works is incalculable; for, if we are justified by faith, we shall be judged by works, whether they be good or bad. These good works must appear if faith is real; the life of God must flow through us and produce His creative and redemptive works.

Made good by faith we must do good. Impelled by love and gratitude to God we are bound to ask, What must we do? Not, what must we do to be saved? But what, as saved, must we do? Saved by Christ we must desire above everything "His works to do." It must be the business of life to work out the salvation which He has given us. With an eager pertinacity we must be always asking, what should we do that we might work the works of God?

The commandments of God press on the soul, not as a burden, but as the guidance for living a true life, and as the worthy ends for which we live. They seem a load to carry on the shoulders, if they are looked at without faith; but faith finds them to be wings. The works He gives us to do are our chief blessing. There is truth in the idea which Carlyle made the common possession of us all, that our work in life is the chief good. The work's self, not that for which we work, is God's blessing on us. Find your work, and do it, is the secret of a happy life. But over and above this value of having our task in life, and filling our days with honourable toil, is this superlative value of the works which faith sets us to attempt and gives us the power to accomplish. The commandments of God! What are they, in the light of Christ and His redemption? An old prophet could sum them up in words which are still valid and vital, "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Mic. vi. 8). But while that is a beautiful and pithy epitome of the Commandments, it does not yet express the added grace of Christianity. "What must we do that we may work the works of God? This is the work of God that ye believe in Him whom He has sent" (John vi. 28).

Believing in Jesus Christ opens up a whole world of activities, the motive of which is love, the method of which is faith, the object of which is to continue, to fill up, His gracious holy work in the world. It simplifies life to say that its whole work is to believe on Jesus Christ; but to believe on Jesus Christ as

the work of life is to open up channels of service, and vistas of achievement, which Micah did not know, which even the last of the prophets, John the Baptist, had not realized. That last, and Christ thought, greatest of the prophets understood the self-discipline—the *askesis*—the keeping under of the body, the stout wrestle with the appetites and the passions, which is a preliminary work of God. He also understood many of the particular moral precepts which applied to special classes of society; but in a sense, as Christ said, the least in the Kingdom of God was greater than he. For whoever was in that Kingdom had Christ to present to the world, Christ in all the fulness of His personal perfection, in all the richness of His unique teaching, in all the accomplishment of His cross. And this was the work of ever widening significance for the world, to preach Christ to the world. Those who are justified by faith like Paul or Luther, find the commanding purpose of life is to make known Christ to men, to win men to His obedience, and to make His thought and His will prevail in the conduct of human life.

This seems a specialized view of "good works," but it results from the whole conception of justification by faith, when that justification comes through Christ, when that faith is faith in Christ. Good works for those who think they must be justified by their works, are usually certain outward acts, ceremonial or benevolent, the attendance at services, or giving alms to the beggars at the door. But good works for them who are made good by faith are more than

those, more, additional—"these should ye have done, not leave the others undone." The difference lies in the singleness of motive, in the unification of life. Good works in this Christian sense are at once more simple and more varied than good works in the general sense. These works resulting from justification by faith in Christ are the continuance of His work in the world, the transformation of our own personalities into His, the surrender of all our faculties, body, soul and spirit in His service.

We may look at these works in the three classes just mentioned :

First of all, there are the works which aim at making known Christ to men, Christ as He was in the days of His flesh, Christ as He is in the world of the Spirit, Christ as Teacher, as Master, as Saviour, as King.

Such is the work of preaching, the work of every real pastor or shepherd of souls. Such are our labours to make Christ a living bright reality, to bring all the events of His earthly life into the life of to-day, to manifest Him, crucified, dead and buried, risen and ascended.

Such also is the work of scholarship, which aims at handling the documents and authorities in order to set forth Christ, as accurately and completely as possible. The good work of scholars is not so immediately recognized as that of preachers. Luther makes much more noise in the world than Erasmus ; Lightfoot impresses his time much more than Hort. But the Greek Testament of Erasmus, or the *Christian*

Ecclesia of Hort probably exercises a more searching and a more lasting influence in making known Christ to the world than the sermons which, great as they were in delivery, fall cold and flat on the later generations.

But the supreme way of making Christ known to the world is not by preaching, or writing, but by living. "For me to live is Christ" the apostle could say. If only we all could say it! But at least it may be our constant object so to live and so to act that suggestions of our Lord and Master come from all we do and say. David Hume, sceptic as he was, declared that when John Brown of Haddington was in the pulpit, he seemed to see Christ there. And we may be sure of this that if in love to Christ we can restrain our temper and bridle our tongue, and be ready with words and deeds of love to help the distressed and to comfort the mourners, though we may never see any great fruit of our life, and cannot point to anyone really changed or improved—yet we have done a good work for our Lord. That woman who in love poured the precious ointment on His head, did a very little thing, which was even censured at the time. But the house was filled with the fragrance, and the fame of it has come down all the ages, as a witness to Jesus.

Then the second class of good works includes all the efforts of love to win men, women and children to Christ. Some preaching has this effect; many teachers in schools accomplished this work. Perhaps the teaching and a close contact with the individual

are more fruitful than preaching. The teacher who may gather a few around him, and not only teach but love, showing a personal interest, and a concern for the whole life not only in school but at home, not only at work but at play, probably in the course, let us say, of twenty years, wins more to Christ than a preacher, who only preaches for twenty years.

But winning people to Christ is a sacred art which may take many and very varied forms. I remember a little book called *Modern Miracles* by Mrs. Leila Thompson, which tells how that devoted woman visited and cared for some of the most abandoned and degraded men in Manchester. Her tact and wisdom were surprising; her kindness melted away all suspicion and resentment. And after long efforts she seemed always at last to get home the truth of Christ, and to win the poor sin-stained and sin-sickened soul.

Then Edward Smith of Bewdley, though an active and successful business man, spent all his leisure and strength and love in seeking to save men. Through his Adult School he would gather in those who were complete outsiders, and in the friendly atmosphere would bring them almost unconsciously to the Christ. He would take you through his warehouse, and with a silent nod indicate one man after another whom he had recovered from ways of debauchery and dishonesty, and made of them useful and grateful workers, not only for him, but for his Master. As a magistrate he would come down from the Bench, asking his fellow magistrates to leave some hardened offender to him;

and by his personal interest and care he would touch the heart, and make Christ a reality to one who in no other way could be won. His little books, *On Mending Men* and *On Men Mended*, are most telling examples of the good works which come from justification by faith.

The third class of good works embraces all the attempts that are made, and have never been so much made as now, to bring the spirit and purpose of Christ into the ordinary life of men. The Conference on Politics, Economics and Citizenship, which is known as C.O.P.E.C., was an onward step in the Christian life of this country. Those who convened it, managed and directed it, and published its results were indeed maintaining good works. For, by their most diligent study and thought they were showing how Christ, our Lord and Saviour, regards, and would deal with the complex conditions of our present-day life. From what He said and did in the very simple and exceptional life of Palestine under the Roman Empire, it is possible to find what He would say and do now. The nature of God and His purpose for the world can be brought to bear on present-day conditions—on Education, on the Home, on the Relation of the Sexes, on the Use of Leisure, on the Treatment of Crime, on International Relations, on War, on Industry and Property, on Politics and Citizenship, on the Social Function of Christianity. In the past the triumphs of Christ may be traced, and His triumphs of the future may be prepared.

This great movement is rich in promise for the

future if only we can keep close to our Lord, and realize our justification by faith alone; though there is a manifest danger that in such broad fields of enterprise and reform we may lose sight of the motive and the power which are in Christ alone. Our good works may, if we are not watchful, obsess us and hide from our eyes the real author of them all. In a word we must exercise vigorously the faculty of faith, not only that we may do the works of faith, but that we may not let the works swamp the faith. The river of faith must not lose itself in the sand of the desert.

CHAPTER VI

HEALING BY FAITH: "CHRISTIAN SCIENCE"

It is a striking fact that with the rapid advance of medical science and of surgical skill during the last century there came an eager desire to get and to keep health by methods which would supplement, and supersede, the work of the doctor and the nurse. A conviction appeared in many forms that disease was unnecessary, and it could be overcome by purely spiritual, and even by mental, operations.

This yearning for health found an extraordinary expression in the book called *Science and Health*, which has been sold in greater numbers and at a higher relative price than any book that was ever published. It is a very curious work; to the uninitiated it seems a bundle of extravagances and contradictions. The work of an untrained and undisciplined mind, it seems hardly worthy of serious criticism. With a complete ignorance of Biblical scholarship it offers a key to the Scriptures; it treats the Scriptures as material which can be forced to mean what the writer wishes to say; and the authority of the Scripture is transferred to this new and

arbitrary interpretation. Nothing in the book escapes this daring hand; the Lord's Prayer is re-written, the Lord's Cross is ignored, the Lord's death is regarded as an infirmity of mortal mind, the Lord's Supper is abolished.

Underlying this drastic correction of the Bible is a metaphysical doctrine which revolutionizes everything: God is good, therefore evil does not exist. Matter does not exist because God is Spirit, and the sole existence. All we have to do is to assert, to demonstrate, the one Good, and every kind of evil, sickness, sin, death will be discovered as unrealities, the delusions of mortal mind. As these evils can be dissipated by the strong and persistent assertion of the one Good, all the elaborate knowledge resulting from medical research is unnecessary, the surgeon's skill is no longer wanted. To call in a doctor, or to take medicine, is to divert the mind from the one good which, by persistent assertion, will do all that doctor and medicine could do, and a great deal which doctor and medicine never did, or could do.

Once when I had been pleading for our hospitals I was met in the vestry by a student of this new metaphysic and therapeutic, who said: "You will be sorry one day for what you have been preaching." "But," I said, "why is it more objectionable to take medicines than to take food? Nature supplies material things which sustain the body and keep it in health; she also supplies herbs and minerals which cure its ailments. If it is right to take food —and I believe people of your persuasion do eat——"

He broke in: "Christian Scientists, as they understand the truth, eat less and less." Then I broke in: "And therefore, I suppose, the complete Christian Scientist, your founder, for example, eats nothing?" My critic did not stay to demonstrate farther. He had afforded me a fair example of the new logic which supports the new metaphysic. About the same time I had another illustration. The appalling earthquake had recently destroyed Messina; the author of *The Plea for a Fair Consideration of Christian Science* had been to see me, and had expounded the system in its logical completeness. Evil was only illusion, matter had no reality. The assertion or demonstration of the one Good dissipated the unrealities which we call sickness, sin, disaster, death. "But," I ventured to urge, "on that principle, if Christian Scientists had been there the earthquake of Messina would have been prevented?" "Certainly," he said. According to this doctrine it might have been prevented by "absent treatment."

A belated logic compelled the author of this great teaching to recognize a force called natural magic, which seemed to be real enough, because it seemed to frustrate or overthrow her teaching. Natural magic to the unitiated was exactly the same thing as the evil, the existence of which had been denied.

Science and Health, then, does not present itself as a very satisfying metaphysical system, or as a trustworthy interpretation of the Holy Bible, nor does the author of the work, on inquiry and fuller knowledge, appear to be quite on the moral and spiritual level

of the founders of other religions. But here is the indisputable fact: the authoress saw in her lifetime a church of a million followers gathered and organized; her book was bought and read and treasured, as much as the Bible had been; and Mary Baker Eddy is reverenced by countless thankful people as the greatest benefactress of the race. Even when she was so far overcome by the infirmity of mortal mind, as to violate her own teaching by succumbing to the illusion of death, her followers were unshaken, and only grew in numbers and influence.

How is this truly wonderful phenomenon to be explained? Herself an invalid and a sufferer for many years, she was completely healed by Quimbay; and she tried to give to the world the truth she had experienced. Through her writings multitudes have been healed. Her church, oddly distinguished from the Christian Church by the designation Scientist, really diverges from the older institution by being a healer. It is so far Christian in that, like Christ, it attracts the sick and heals them. It is a community of physical and material well-being. On the other hand it does not give to Christ the place which He holds in His Church. Christ crucified is anathema. The Cross is a stumbling block. "Do this in remembrance of me" becomes in Christian Science: "even if you forget me, never do this."

But whatever faults and errors Mary Baker Eddy may display, she has done this great service to our race and to our time; she made the Church consider why our Lord came healing all diseases, and why

He sent out His disciples to heal as well as to preach. She brought the Church sharp up with the question: What has become of the ministry of healing? The Church has left the healing art to the medical profession. When Christ sent out His disciples to preach and to heal, did He mean some were to preach and some were to heal? Did He contemplate a healing profession and a preaching profession working separately? Or did He intend the two to be indivisible, a "new doctrine" like His own, which manifested itself at once in the "healing of disease?" She also set that truth of God as Good, God as the only real and inclusive existence, in a light so commanding that no one now can ignore it. If from that truth she drew inferences which experience does not confirm; if she so insisted on those unconfirmed inferences that there is danger of disappointed man denying the major premiss, that God is Good, and drifting back into the old bewildering Manicheism, the error is for us to correct by fuller knowledge and by clearer thinking. But it was a great service to humanity to insist on the primal, essential, eternal Goodness which is responsible for creation, even the creation of sinful man. And to affirm and reaffirm and demonstrate that Goodness which is God, in defiance of all the things which seem to impugn or to disprove it, is certainly a great way of helping the world, and renewing human life. Optimism, however extravagant, is incomparably more salutary than Pessimism, however plausible.

Christian Science may not be—and indeed it

certainly is not—Science, and it may be only in a very one-sided sense Christian, but it has stirred up the Church to recover its neglected art of healing; it has shown the power of spirit to affect the body; it has opened a new and very consoling thought that God wishes disease to be overcome, even eliminated. It has encouraged medical science itself to give a larger place to the spiritual side of man, and the therapeutic powers that are stored in his mental constitution. M. Coué with his method of healing by auto-suggestion, as well as by suggestion, is, perhaps unwittingly, a disciple of Mary Baker Eddy. We may therefore, without ignoring the human infirmities and mental limitations of this remarkable woman, feel a real gratitude to her. We may cherish the conviction that the good she did will live and work and serve the future hour, when *Science and Health* has been superseded, and the Church of Christ, Scientist, has dropped the unmeaning Scientist, and consented to become Christian.

But here is the discovery, the rediscovery, of a truth never wholly lost, viz. that the Master Faculty, Faith, is the supreme healing and health-giving power, given us to use, by that God, who, as He forgiveth all our iniquities, so also healeth all our diseases (Ps. ciii. 2). The method and principle are the same in both cases. If God is seen in Christ bearing our sins, He is also seen bearing our diseases (Matt. viii. 17). Yes, the prophetic word was applicable in each case (Is. liii. 4). He bore our sins, not by being Himself sinful; He healed our diseases, not by being Himself

ill. But as He took our sins away by pouring into us His own pure life—"take and drink this: this is the blood of the new covenant shed for you for the remission of sins"—so He takes our diseases away and gives us life more abundantly, by uniting us with God, who is the "health of our countenance and our God" (Ps. xliii. 5).

Let us look at the facts in the light of our discovery, or rediscovery, of the truth of healing. We have the divine faculty of coming into real and vital union with God. The springs of our life are in Him. We live because He breathed, and breathes, into us the breath of life. In Him we live and move and have our being. When this becomes a conscious realization, and by faith we take that immediacy of God into our bodies, His life in us overcomes disease, renews our tissues, corrects any defect in the organs, and produces that balanced and harmonized working of all the functions, mental and physical, which we call health. God does not will disease; He wills health for all; if health is disturbed, His will is to restore it. Christ from the very beginning of His ministry began to heal by eliciting this Master Faculty. The lame walked, the blind saw, the paralysed rose and carried the mats on which they lay. It was very astonishing to everybody; but to Christ it was quite natural. He saw that people were suffering everywhere, because the faculty which God had given to all and meant to be used remained unemployed. The body of every human being is meant to be in direct communication with the living God, and to draw

from Him all the days of its appointed life the unimpeded health which He wishes to impart. God means our health; God has given us the faculty by which we may draw our health from Him; everyone might say "He restoreth my soul," everyone might have by his bedside the Good Physician.

And we should never forget that this has always been known and practised by many. John Wesley, e.g., has happily shown us the whole of his life, physical and spiritual, in his *Journal*. And as constant as the supply of spiritual strength, which enabled him to turn his generation to God, is the physical recruiting which again and ever again enabled him to arise from severe attacks of illness and preach and travel, leaving as it were the disease behind.[1] This lesson

[1] A typical example from the *Journal*, Sunday, April 24, 1748:

"I preached at Skinner's Alley at five, and on Oxmantown Green at eight. I was weak in body but was greatly revived by the seriousness and earnestness of the congregation. Resolving to improve the opportunity I gave notice of preaching there again in the afternoon; which I did to a congregation much more numerous and equally attentive. As I came home I was glad to lie down, having a quinsey attended with a fever. However, when the society met, I made a shift to creep in among them. Immediately my voice was restored. I spoke without pain for near an hour together. And great was our rejoicing over each other; knowing that God would order all things well."

Monday, 25th. "Finding my fever greatly increased, I judged it would be best to keep my bed, and live a while on apples and apple tea. On Tuesday I was quite well, and should have preached, but that Dr. Rutty, who had been with me twice, insisted on my resting for a time."

Or, Sunday, March 15, 1761:

"I made a shift to preach within at eight in the morning, but in the afternoon I knew not what to do, having a pain in my side, and a sore throat. However, I resolved to speak as long as I could. I stood at one end of the house, and the people (supposed to be eight or ten thousand) in the field adjoining. I spoke from, 'I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.'

"When I had done speaking my complaints had gone."

of Wesley's life has been passed over owing to the inexplicable error into which the Church has fallen. But from all records of good lives we gather experiences of the same kind. It is not the exception, but the rule, that the faithful in all the ages have, by this faculty, drawn from the living God health and healing. Even when they have gratefully accepted the services of doctors and drugs (as Wesley himself did) they have been aware that the healing was the life of God in them, and it came by faith in Him. The reason why this fact passes unnoticed is that our minds are prejudiced with certain errors, which, happily, we now begin to recognize.

We are freed, we hope, for ever from the Manichean heresy which regards the body as sinful, a kind of wild beast that must be subdued by fasting and discipline. But we are not yet freed from the error that the spiritual is dominated by the material. A whole generation tried to ignore the spiritual and treated the material as fundamental. The superstition of materialism is hard to escape. The discovery of germs as the *cause* of disease, tyrannizes over us; if the germs have got into us we succumb. As the doves when the hawk swoops on them, as the rabbit stands still and offers its throat to the ferret, so we give in before the unseen terrors of physical causes. Say "bacteria" and nothing more is to be said. But in reality everything is yet to be said; the life-force, the Spirit, God, are stronger than bacteria. Materialism has cowed us, and forces multitudes of people to surrender to disease without a struggle, for scientific reasons.

But there is another error which begins now to be exposed. The theory that disease and suffering are sent by God as discipline and training—or even as a testing of our faith—leads many meek and gentle spirits to accept it all without an effort, and even to kiss the rod. Submission is counselled by the Book of Job, by Gethsemane, and even by Calvary. The Master Faculty, instead of being used as it might be to lay hold of God's strength and to be at peace with Him, is only used to accept the inscrutable discipline of pain, disease and death. It is time we re-read the Gospels and got back into the crowd which thronged our Lord, and determined to touch the hem of His garment, convinced that if we touched Him we should be healed.

But why, we ask, if it is the will of God to heal us, does He permit sickness, weakness and death to form the constant accompaniments of human life? Why, in spite of all the marvellous discoveries of science, in spite of the devotion of doctors and nurses and the immense advance of hygienic conditions, do old diseases still baffle us, and new diseases still emerge? Why, so soon as we gain control of diphtheria, or phthisis, or small-pox, do we find ourselves at once in the horrors of cancer, the threats of appendicitis, and the mysterious ravages of influenza? Surely, it may be said, God does not mean us to be free from disease; He cannot in the world constituted as it is, will the health of all. The question is hard to answer. But I venture on a suggestion. As God has given us the Master Faculty

of Faith, so it is His master purpose to get us to employ it. His desire is towards us; He yearns for our trust, for that reliance on Him which enables Him to exert all His power for us.

If disease ceased, if health were secure for us without effort or thought, if life on earth were guaranteed for us without fear of death, what would human beings become? If we are to judge from what we see in those who enjoy some immunity from disease, and end their days without experience of sickness and pain, there is some ground for thinking that men would lose their spiritual nature altogether, would live and enjoy, and spend the endless centuries in the limited circle of the senses, careless of their Maker, just because He had made them entirely independent of Him. God had to impose on His creature what Plato in one of his beautiful images calls "The ages' bridle" of ill-health, to keep even the attention of those whom He wants as His children. Or in George Herbert's lovely image, man had to be left unsatisfied, lest the creature might forget the Creator, and welcome the gift rather than the Giver. So both would losers be. This was the pulley which would draw us to God. This alone would toss us on His breast. To have men on His breast was His desire; the way to accomplish it must be beyond our criticism.

He wills the health of men, but not as a gift coming as a matter of course, a gift unrecognized and therefore unvalued. He wills the health of men, realized as His gift, sought and found by the Faith which brings us into close and vital communion with Himself.

Now what has so constantly prevented men, even real Christian men, from exercising this God-seeking and God-finding faculty, is the notion that sickness is a material disorder which must be dealt with by the students of matter and of physical causation. The sufferer puts his disease in the hands of the doctor, just as in more ignorant ages he put his soul in the hands of the priest, and turns to other affairs. But, if only he knew, if only he were better advised, he would gratefully call in the skill and knowledge of doctor and nurse, and he would send for the elders of the Church to anoint him and to pray over him, but none the less, he would, while his faculties remain with him, address his whole soul to His God, through Jesus Christ, and take what God is ready to give, the whole healing, restoring and quickening Spirit of God into his being. "The prayer of faith shall save him that is sick and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him" (James v. 14).

And this brings in another consideration. As was shown by Christ's first commission to His disciples, there is a faith which can heal others, as well as a faith which the sick person can exert to receive healing.

There are still, as St. Paul recognized, some who receive a charisma, or spiritual gift, for healing. By their faith or prayer or teaching, they heal. Like their Lord "they lay their hands on the sick" and heal them. This exceptional gift is now recognized and welcomed. And as the faith of the Church

returns, such divinely gifted healers may multiply. But apart altogether from persons with special gifts, it begins to be seen that the Church, as such, by virtue of her Lord's presence in her and use of her, has a ministry of healing, a store of health to impart. There is a school of thought in the Church to-day which ventures to seek in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper this healing power. As in early days the bread was called the bread of immortality, these teachers and leaders encourage the idea that health is communicated in the bread of the Eucharist, that in this tangible and manducable form God conveys His quickening power into the body of the communicant. Without accepting in its crudity this materialistic doctrine, we may welcome the truth which it suggests. And we may freely recognize the fact that there are some minds that seem incapable of receiving any truth except in sacramental forms. But the Church has certainly received from her Lord a commission to heal, and she may not hand over her commission to the medical profession, nor wait for the emergence of exceptional healers, to execute her task. She ought, in her services and teaching, to heal. She ought to exercise the potent instrument of prayer. She ought to encourage an attitude of mind, a spirit as of those who have been with Jesus, that carries health in visiting and even in casual contacts. "The healing of His seamless dress is by our beds of pain." Every living member of the Church should wear that seamless dress and should, of purposes, and for love's sake, be beside the beds of pain.

The teaching from pulpits and class-rooms should be more confidently given; that Jesus healed the sick and commissioned His disciples to do the same. The stories in the *Acts* and the definite precepts of the Epistles should not be explained away as belonging to an age of miracles that is past, but as examples for continuing the age of miracles now. The close connection of body and mind should be taught, and the wish that people should "be in health as their souls prosper" (3 John 2) should be justified, and brought home as one reason why we should seek the prosperity of the soul. This kind of teaching has fallen into some disuse.

But the faith of *others* can save the sick. When they brought the palsied man to Christ with great effort, He turned to heal him because He saw *their* faith. It is not a matter which can be demonstrated theoretically; but it can be proved experimentally. Let a Church realize its responsibility for the sick, and instead of thinking that it has done all that is incumbent upon it (by subscribing to hospitals and engaging the best doctors), let it meet regularly, say once a week, and bring to God in prayer the names and needs of those who are ill. Let the prayers be quite specific, for healing, for restoration. Let it be the underlying conviction: God can heal, God wills to heal, God promises to heal in answer to prayer. Let the sufferers be brought, as that palsied youth was borne of four and set down at the feet of Christ. Let the prayer of faith be simply and humbly offered, with no thought that the suppliants can do anything

but ask, but with the conviction that God can do what is asked. Let this continue regularly, not in a time of special illness only, but as a recognized and necessary part of the Church's ministry, regular as the services on Sunday, or as the Sunday School, and much more regular than the multiplied recreations and amusements, dances, whist drives and so forth, which are the most prominent announcements on the doors of many church buildings. Let this ministry be rendered with the same fidelity as any other part of the work. Let it be carried through as thoroughly and conscientiously as the great beneficent work of a modern hospital. In a word, let the Church accept her commission to "preach the gospel and heal the sick."

What happens if this step of obedience is taken? Let it be at once acknowledged that the sick are not all healed, and that some, passionately prayed for, yet die. (It is said that in a city where Christian Science has become predominant—of course in the United States—it is not observed that the death-rate is reduced or varies from the average in the whole country.)

But many are healed. In some cases where the doctors have despaired, and given up, God raises up the sufferer. With every instance of healing comes a new sense of spiritual life and power; those who are raised up are not only restored, but enriched in their life and work, whatever it may be. An atmosphere of health and healing is created. The Church becomes to those who attend it buoyant with hope.

And as disease is often the result of depression and despair—it is said now that cancer often comes from this cause—a great prophylactic and preventive influence is at work. The faith that has healed some gives hope for all. And as thought turns, not to the diseases, their symptoms and their causes, but wholly and continually to God, the sovereign Lord of life and of death, as He showed Himself in the compassion and the healing work of Christ, there is an uplifting power which keeps the body well, as the mind is cheerful, and saves the hearts that trust from the "Pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday" (Ps. xci. 6).

It is certainly most important that the Church should recover her healing art. At present some people become Christian Scientists because they find in that communion a curative power which they miss in the Church. Christian Science has demonstrated the need there is for such a spiritual power, in a sympathetic fellowship, to deal with the woes and sufferings of mankind.

But if it is asked, Why not allow people to leave the Church and enter Christian Science, and be thankful for this great and beneficent system? the answer must be, that Christian Science, with all the good it does, carries within it seeds of mischief, which are already apparent. The discredit it casts on medical science and skill leads to some very palpable disasters; the believer or his friends refuse to seek the aid of a doctor until it is too late; and often the doctor has said that if he had been summoned in time the

life would have been saved.[1] But what is more serious than this is that the principles advocated by Mrs. Eddy and her followers, would, carried to their logical conclusions, put an end to all scientific research and discovery. If matter has no reality, it is useless to spend time in the investigation of its laws. If God is the only existence, and everything is to be accomplished by recognizing Him and demonstrating His goodness, research into the powers and properties of Nature becomes superfluous. Christianity taught us that Nature is God's handiwork, given to us, to understand and to use, rich in beauty to delight eye and mind, and further that it is a parabolic through which God is constantly speaking to us and teaching us. Science is therefore the product of Christianity, but "Christian Science" would put an end to it. There is therefore an overwhelming reason for maintaining Christianity as against "Christian Science."

And above all, it must give anyone pause to think of entering a "Church" which dispenses with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and regards the Cross of Christ as a blunder for which an apology is required. Remembering what that Sacrament has meant, and means, for millions of Christians, the spiritual nourishment that it has brought to the soul, the penitence, the faith, the pardon, the holy resolutions, the humility, the loss of self, the discovery of God, the communion with Him, the sacred fellowship of those who have walked in the light, and in

[1] See Dr. Stephen Paget's *The Faith and Works of Christian Science.*

their communion one with another have found the blood of Jesus cleansing them from all sin; and realizing what the Cross means for mankind, the self-sacrifice and self-giving of God, the regenerating pardon which is offered to us all without derogating from the holiness of God, or making light of sin, the sublime stimulus to self-sacrifice for the world, and self-giving to our fellow men; we can see what a fateful and incalculable loss it must ultimately be, to lose the Bible in *Science and Health*, to exchange the Galilean philosophy for the metaphysic of Mrs. Eddy, to forgo justification by faith for the vain device of getting rid of evil by denying its existence, and then bringing it back under the name of natural magic.

CHAPTER VII

THEOSOPHY AND FAITH

"Our many lives on earth" was the subject for the Sunday evening discourse at the Theosophical Hall. The speaker was a lady, and she was able to assure her hearers, that they would have many lives—perhaps not exactly how many—on this present earth; and she could show how each life was related to the one which went before and to the one which would come after by a law of cause and effect, called in India Karma. This is the value of Theosophy: it is able to state with confidence what is unknown. It has a remarkable fascination for those who feel themselves cramped within the narrow limits of science and religion. It gives them expanding horizons; it fills up the empty spaces with realities; it corrects, revises and interprets what Science in its hesitating way has taught, what revelation in its crude and confused way has given. This dawn of the new Theosophy is a great feature of our times. It is not exactly new: it connects itself with the Gnostic teachers of the second century, whom the early Church regarded with suspicion; it goes back to the Mysteries which were a feature of pre-Christian Religion, the Mysteries at Eleusis, the esoteric cults which were familiar in

Phrygia and Egypt, and in fact in every religion. The teaching of Theosophy is that there is and must be in every religion an inner circle, the adepts, who can receive what is hidden from the vulgar; that if in any religion not many wise and thinking people are called, if the babes are to have their suitable milk, there is another, an inner, truth for the intellectuals, strong meat which can satisfy the more developed intelligence. Is it not evident that in the spiritual school the classes must be graded, and it is impossible to give to the primary what is suitable to the senior forms? This higher, deeper, truer, more philosophical, more satisfying knowledge—the knowledge of the Lesser Mysteries, and then of the Greater Mysteries—comes through initiates, the specially qualified organs of the fuller revelation. Their science, for of course it is a science to be studied and acquired like any other science, is Occultism. The adepts are the true occultists, but in a secondary degree all who are learning to be adepts—the way is open to all who are pure in heart and will devote themselves to the study—are already occultists. They are raised above the mass of mankind who have only an exoteric religion. They are, like the early Mystics (*μύσται*), like those first Christians, whom the Church unhappily pronounced heretics, the "knowing people," Gnostics. There have always been initiates; Jesus was an initiate; He is sometimes called "the last great initiate"; but there have been others since, Madam Blavatsky, and familiar names still happily among us; but for the present-day initiates, the world would

have remained in ignorance of—a great deal. It is to them we owe the knowledge that we have, not one only, but seven bodies, some even say fourteen. They have shown us the endless orders of spiritual beings that throng around us. "Thrones, dominations, virtues, princedoms, powers," as Milton called them. It is they who have confirmed, if not demonstrated, the metempsychosis which Plato taught, the transmigration of souls, or as they call it Reincarnation. They have shown, far beyond the Science of Comparative Religions, that all religions are of equal value, that the same truths and facts underlie them all; that it is a mistake therefore for any religion to proselytize—missions are unnecessary—the only missionary message is that of Theosophy.

Our adepts also have access to the original manuscripts of the Bible, which otherwise were lost; they can therefore correct our Bibles for us, and tell us much which had disappeared from our versions. They can give us, now for the first time, the real story of Jesus. Thus:—

"The child whose Jewish name has been turned into that of Jesus was born in Palestine, 105 B.C., during the consulate of Publius Rutilius Rufus and Gnæus Mallius Maximus." The story is given in full by Mrs. Besant, in her *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 130. It is very beautiful in itself; and most of the details might be drawn from the Gospels. But the fact that His birth was a hundred years earlier than our histories state is very important—for estimating the value of Occultism.

Our adepts also are able to disentangle from this

historical Jesus, the Mythic Christ, and all those things in the Gospels which are myths common to many if not all religions; they are able also to show the Mystic Christ, that Word or Logos, uniting Himself with Jesus, presumably in the century before our Jesus came, at the Baptism, which occurred to our Jesus in the time of John the Baptist, and withdrawing from Him at the crucifixion, as the early Docetists taught. This confusion of centuries, so characteristic of Occultism, does not, however, so much matter, because our adepts show that Christ is not a definite, isolated, person in history, but a spiritual life, which is, or might be, lived by all—we are all Christs, or might be. And the Gospel story is an allegory or parable of all our lives, in which a birth, a baptism, a temptation, a transfiguration, a crucifixion, an ascension (at least in the sense of disappearing until the next reincarnation) occur to all. But where the adepts render the greatest service to our religion is in the interpretation of the Christian doctrines in the light of the lesser mysteries. In this department stones of stumbling are rolled away, even if other stones of stumbling are perversely rolled *into* the way.

The Atonement is the self-sacrifice of the Logos, offered in the self-sacrifice of all. Thus the offence of the Cross ceases. The doctrine of resurrection and ascension is simplified by the recognition of the seven bodies: (1) The Physical. (2) The Desire Body. (3) The Mental Body. (4) The Heavenly Body. (5) The Causal Body. (6) The Bliss Body. (7) The

Glory Body. The Trinity is found in all religions, and is represented by the two crossed triangles. Prayer is elaborated in an edifying manner. The forgiveness of sins is explicated by the doctrine of Reincarnation, because sins work out their sorrows in other lives as well as this. Here and elsewhere that early Gnostic work, the *Pistis Sophia*, of Valentinus, seems to be still a valuable revelation. The adepts offer a very detailed defence of Sacraments, holy water, charms, and other familiar usages of religion which to modern minds had become obscure. And, to mention but one service more, all sacred books are justified: the Vedas, the Koran, no less than the Bible. For where the power is available to read behind the existing books the original writings, and to give their pertinent interpretation, all Bibles may easily be equally true.

From this hasty summary it will be seen what fields of knowledge and wisdom Theosophy opens to the modern mind.

The only demur that has to be entered is: How are we to know who are the initiates? How are their credentials to be obtained? If they differ—and they do differ—Dr. Steiner seems to have broken from Mrs. Besant, and to have inaugurated an Anthroposophy in opposition to her Theosophy—how are we to be sure which is the right authority? Or, if the only way to initiation, is by purity and self-purgation, and complete disinterestedness, is the revelation of those who have not conformed to those conditions invalidated?

It is a marvellous range of truth and revelation—if it be truth, and if it be revelation. But unless everyone goes through the initiation for himself and becomes an initiate, there seems no safe criterion for knowing whether the oracles of Occultism are true or false. This is a great weakness, and it might be fatal to Theosophy, but that there are many people who are not concerned whether things are true, but only whether they are agreeable and interesting; and there are always many ready to enter into any Mysteries, which convey a knowledge hidden from, and imply an intelligence not possessed by, the vulgar.

And if once a question about the authority of Occultists is raised, another question is sure to follow, viz. whether these astonishing revelations, so generously imparted by the hierophants, are intrinsically of very great importance.

Is it really any help to us to learn that Jesus lived a hundred years before Christ? Is religion in any sense deepened by treating the story of Jesus as a mere allegory of the lives of all initiates? Is the division of Christianity into esoteric and exoteric a valuable contribution to humility and love and the things which make for peace?

Or to take the doctrine of Reincarnation, which is the keystone of the Theosophical teaching. Is it proved, or only a speculation? If it were proved, would it bring a real relief to the problem of human life, or only clear away some difficulties to bring in others as great or greater?

Suppose our lady-lecturer shows us conclusively

that we have many lives on earth, how does it help us? Nay, does not the idea deliver certain shattering blows which destroy some of our truest consolations? We have no definite consciousness that our present incarnation is causally related with previous or subsequent incarnations. It may curb our impatience and teach us humility to believe that all our troubles and sorrows are the inevitable result of things we did in a previous existence; but it is just as likely to sink us in despair or to drive us into rebellion. Does it really help us to bear pain if we know that we richly deserve it? And as we have no memory of the sins in a former life for which we are suffering now, we cannot repent of those sins, or learn how to avoid them in the future. It may be said that it is a spur to good and self-denying conduct to believe that if this life does not reward us, we shall come into it again, perhaps ages hence, as some other person, and that other person will receive the reward due to us. Can it be said that these vague, shadowy, suppositions of forgotten pasts and unknown futures will influence conduct, make us do good and avoid evil, with anything like the force which comes from knowing that our fellow men award us more or less our due for all the good and evil we do, but that the Eternal and living God rewards all the good with infallible justice, and woos us to do good and to avoid evil by the revelation of His redeeming grace?

But where the doctrine of Reincarnation deals us the cruelest blow is just here, that it takes from us those we have loved and lost. In place of that promised

meeting in the many mansions of our Father's house, where we hope to find again the vanished loves of other years—that is, in place of the greatest comfort that the Christian religion has brought to the sorrowful hearts of men, the assured renewal in happier conditions of all good and faithful human love—we are to think of our dear lost loves as by no means awaiting the reunion. The one we lost years ago may be already reincarnated in some other part of the world, living a life and forming connections in total disregard of us. And when our turn comes to go, we shall not be carried into the home and company for which our hearts have yearned, but we shall be brought back to the present troubled earth, to work out the results of our previous existences, without any knowledge of what they had been. The old loves will be replaced by the new. Another life must be lived through in other conditions, and then another and another, until some Buddhist Nirvana stops the ever-turning wheel and lands us at last in welcome unconsciousness.

No, the adepts have not served us well here. They have robbed us of heaven and of love; they have set before us a prospect which can bring no satisfaction, and might even become a nightmare to fear. Do they really know, by the superior intelligence of the Occult, that this is the fate which awaits mankind? Or is it merely a speculation of those who are trying to adjust the calamities and injustices of life, or of those who are staggered by the ceaseless production of incalculable hosts of individual lives? If our adepts

will own that it is only a speculation, dictated by a desire to ease the problem of human life, we may bear with them, though we may venture to reject their conclusions. But if they are showing truths hidden from us, telling us on authority what will and must be, if this is revelation, to supersede older revelations, and to clear the night of ignorance, they have delivered a staggering blow to humanity. They give us an assurance of endless punishment. They torment us beforehand.

But it must not be supposed that it is the Master Faculty, Faith, which theosophists employ in accepting these revelations—shall we call them?—of the initiates. It is only the same faculty by which we all accept the statements or revelations of Science. We believe a great deal which we cannot ourselves prove, for example the constitution of the atom, or the size and distance of the stars, because we trust the men of science and the validity of their methods. And that is not by any means Faith. In the same way the followers of Madam Blavatsky, or Mrs. Besant, or Mr. Leadbeater, or Dr. Steiner, accept as truths what they are told. The only difference is that while Science commands the general assent of all intelligent people, Theosophy does not command a very general assent. But to those who accept the authority of the initiates and admit the validity of the methods employed, the revelations are on the same plane as scientific facts. They are accepted in the belief that the authority is valid. When the theosophist accepts the assertion that Jesus was born in 105 B.C., he does

so on exactly the same ground that ordinary people believe that He was born in 5 B.C. (according to our reckoning). Or when he is assured that he has seven bodies, he believes it by the same mental act as that which others employ when they accept the testimony of the senses that they have only one body a-piece. Or when he receives the information that he has many lives on this earth, he employs no other faculty than that by which another believes that he has only one. That is to say, Madam Blavatsky or Mrs. Besant tells him that he is doomed to repeated and indefinite reincarnations ; he believes that the initiate is in possession of a larger knowledge than he can obtain ; Occultism is a science, and the declarations of occultists he accepts, as all of us accept the decisions of Science. The difference between ordinary people and theosophists is that the man who has only received a common education does not recognize Occultism as among the sciences, while the theosophist by the authority of the adepts does. He believes the Mahatmas, the secret script, the word of the initiate, just as other people believe the truths of Science. It is a question of evidence and proof ; not of faith. Unkind critics might say it is credulity, the submission of the mind to unproved and impossible fantasies and fictions, the acceptance of authorities, which are liable to be deluded and to delude. But it is uncharitable and unnecessary to stigmatize these beliefs as credulity. Only we must distinguish ; and recognize that they are not Faith.

For Faith, we have seen, is that faculty, latent in

every human mind, by which the mind is able to find God, to enter into communion with Him, to be in such direct touch with Him, that He works in the mind to do and even to will of His pleasure. Faith does not require Mahatmas, or initiates, it goes straight to God, seeks Him and finds Him, reaches Him at one leap. All the weary round of beliefs and creeds, of facts, whether of Science or Theosophy, of forms and ceremonies, mysteries, lesser or greater, leave the human mind unsatisfied, bewildered, confused, halting between two opinions running hither and thither, finding no rest, no centre, no certainty. But God is always at hand, always accessible ; Faith finds Him at once, when it is called into play. And all the circumstances of human life are contrived to call it into play.

> Through all stations human life abounds
> With mysteries : For if Faith were left untried,
> How could the might that lurks within her then
> Be shown ? her glorious excellence—that ranks
> Among the first of powers and virtues—proved ?

God is quite close, not far off. Faith puts out a hand. He is there.

As Tennyson said, and all who have tried know :

> Cast all your care on God ! That anchor holds.

Mrs. Besant, in her *Esoteric Christianity* (p. 293), shows that she knows this. She describes with great beauty of language prayer in its several stages, up to that highest stage of pure worship, in which the soul holds

unimpeded communion with God: "Meditation is the steady quiet fixing of the mind on God, whereby the lower mind is stilled and presently left vacant, so that the Spirit, escaping from it, rises into contemplation of the divine Perfection, and reflects within himself the divine Image. Meditation is silent or *unuttered* prayer, or as Plato expressed it, the ardent turning of the soul towards the Divine; not to ask any particular good (as in the common meaning of prayer) but for Good itself, for the Universal Supreme Good.[1]

"This is the prayer that, by thus liberating the Spirit, is the means of union between man and God. By the working of the laws of thought, a man becomes that which he thinks; and when he meditates on the divine perfections he gradually reproduces in himself that on which his mind is fixed. Such a mind, shaped to the higher and not to the lower, cannot bind the Spirit, and the freed Spirit springing upward to his source, prayer is lost in union, and separateness is left behind.

"Worship also, the rapt adoration from which all petition is absent, and which seeks to pour itself forth in sheer love of the Perfect, dimly sensed, is a means—the easiest means of union with God. In this the consciousness, limited by the brain, contemplates in mute ecstasy the Image it creates of Him whom it knows to be beyond imagining, and oft, rapt by the intensity of His love beyond the limits of the intellect, the man as a free spirit soars upwards into

[1] H. P. Blavatsky, *Key to Theosophy*, p. 10.

realms where these limits are transcended, and feels and knows far more than on his return he can tell in words or clothe in form.

"Thus the Mystic gazes on the beatific vision; thus the Sage rests in the calm of the wisdom that is beyond knowledge; thus the Saint reaches the purity wherein God is seen. Such prayer irradiates the worshipper, and from the mount of such high communion descending to the plains of earth, the very face of flesh shines with supernal glory, translucent to the flame that burns within. Happy they who know the reality which no words may convey to those who know it not. Those whose eyes have seen the King in His beauty will remember, and they will understand."

So far Mrs. Besant. It is well said; that is a good account of prayer; that is undoubtedly the exercise of the Master Faculty, Faith.

But this is open, not only to the exceptional person, the Mystic, the Sage, the Saint, but to every soul, even the humblest, that uses the privilege of prayer in the name of Jesus, prayer in the Spirit, prayer to the Father who is in Heaven. The rapture of worship, the union with God, the close contact with God, which brings the life of God into the soul and gets the will of God into the life, is not a gift confined to those higher human beings, to whose needs Theosophy proposes to minister; it is the blessing of the humble, the secret often hidden from the wise and learned, and revealed to babes. Faith may be exercised by a strong soul like St. Paul; and has been

exercised, and is exercised, by some of the most powerful minds of our time. And faith exercised by a strong and richly gifted mind may do things which less dowered minds cannot do. But the simplest and most limited minds are equally endowed with the faculty, and can and do, come into that vital contact with their God, which not only overcomes sin, but makes them good, and opens to them, according to their talents and opportunities, His inexhaustible treasure. The life hidden with Christ in God may be called esoteric ; but not in an exclusive sense ; it is open to every human soul, and is known to many who are considered wise and great, but to many more who are overlooked, and treated as ignorant and unimportant. The Mystery of Godliness is not like the mysteries of antiquity reserved for initiates, but opened to all who have faith. The Mysteries of Theosophy are more like those of Dionysius and the Eleusinian Demeter than the Mystery of Godliness which St. Paul mentions. The Gnosticism of Valentinus, emerging again after all these centuries, is subject to the same criticism that confronted it in the second century. It obscures the simplicity that is in Christ. It hides in mist and disintegration that historic fact which gave to Christians its distinctive power.

Why, asks a recent writer,[1] did the Mystery-religions pale and die before Christianity ? The main answer is : The devotees of the Mysteries anchored their

[1] *The Mystery Religions and Christianity ; a Study in the Religious Background of Early Christianity*, by S. Angus, Ph.D., D.D., St. Andrew's College, Sydney (John Murray).

hopes for time and eternity on non-historical dying and rising Saviour-gods. The Christian Church possessed a unique advantage over all its competitors, "in having an historic Person as Founder, whose Person was greater than His teachings. Herein lay its originality, and the main secret of its power. Christian enthusiasm was awakened and sustained not by an ideal but by a Person. Christianity was the new spiritual power which entered our humanity from the personality of One who had been a familiar figure in Palestine. Christian preachers did not require faith merely in Jesus' teachings or in His resurrection, but in Himself."

The Mystery-religions could offer only myths, which called for constant purification to meet the moral needs of the day. The ethics of Jesus defied challenge: His character required no burnishing.

Christianity, as John Stuart Blackie said, addressed itself to the world with the triple advantage of a reasonable dogma, a tremendous moral force and an admitted historical basis.

But it is this, which gave to Christianity its triumphant and victorious power, that Theosophy surrenders; it dissolves that historic person away, as the Docetists did in the second century. The Jesus of Theosophy is only one in a long line of initiates; the Christ of Theosophy is a transcendental power appearing in innumerable persons, who may, and ought to be called Christs too.

That one historic basis of the religion crumbles away. Its uniqueness is merged into all the other

religions, and every effort is made to show that what is true in Christianity is taught by Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism—and what is added or needs to be added to the ethnic religions is not Christianity or Christ, but Theosophy, the vague mist of speculations, fictions and dogmas in which the firm outlines of the Gospel and the historic reality of the Founder disappear.

But faith gives all that theosophic credulity gives, and far more.

Faith, which every human mind can exercise if it will, puts the whole personality into immediate and living union with God, the absolute Power and Purpose which are governing the world. Into the centre of consciousness comes that stream of Power, that Light which shows the way, that holiness, which shames and conquers sin, that Love, greater than the love of any creature, which "moves the sun and all the stars," but embraces the individual soul with a warmth and all satisfying fulness, of which the infant's rest in its mother's arms is but a faint symbol.

As in the person of the historic Jesus we are able to contemplate that intimate and unceasing union between the visible Son and the invisible Father:

"At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes; yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight. All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father; and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whom the

Son willeth to reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"—just so through the Son faith effects the same direct and intimate and unbroken union between the soul and God.

In that union all things become possible, not only moral triumphs and spiritual joys, but knowledge, the unveiling of the Divine Nature, the reception of the Divine Power, the sense of the "stream of tendency not ourselves that makes for righteousness" flowing into ourselves, and through ourselves, with sovereign power over things and events. How vague and unconvincing do the theosophical figments appear in comparison with the clear truths which God communicates to the soul—even the least of His little ones—according to its need. All the secrets of the Kingdom—mysteries indeed to the closed spiritual sense, but open mysteries to those whose eyes are opened—God whispers to His child who really trusts Him and leans unreservedly upon Him.

This soul at one with God, by Faith, has its gnosis, its mystery, its esoteric life, has its dispensation of grace given to it by its infinite Father. "By revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote afore in few words, whereby when ye read ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. iii. 2–3). But how unlike is this gnosis to Gnosticism, this mystery to Occultism, this esoteric life to that which Theosophy offers! It is the deep and unmediated revelation of God, which Christ as God's

self-revelation has given, and which the Spirit of God, as Christ's other self, is ever willing to communicate. It is the soul's living contact with the living God, and the discovery, so only made, that "the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partners of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel" (verse 6) all human beings related to one another, because they are directly related to God; the One Infinite Father, from whom all fatherhood is named, seeking perpetually as His children all men, all women, seeking them through His Son, once historically incarnate, always spiritually immanent. Mystery indeed, but such an open mystery, open that is to all who will see, obscure and unintelligible only to those who will not give heed to the voice: "Come unto Me."

The invitation is quite open—no hierophants warn off the profane crowd. All can come, simply, immediately, surely.

CHAPTER VIII

SPIRITUALISM AND FAITH

THE recrudescence of Spiritualism since the War is a subject only of reverent sympathy. It is a cry of heart-hunger, which must touch every heart. In the war 900,000 British lives, mostly young lives, were sacrificed, sons, only sons, all the sons, husbands, lovers, friends. They vanished, sometimes in circumstances known and torturing enough, but often in circumstances more torturing still: blown to pieces, leaving no trace behind, disappearing, no one knew how or where. There were 900,000 homes darkened with a cloud; probably more than 900,000 hearts filled with yearning for those who never would return.

And when the war broke on the world, the old assurance of life beyond death had been gravely weakened. The materialistic philosophy, and the harsh and scornful denials of some scientific men, and above all the fierce unbelief of social democrats, secularist societies, Rational Presses, and the like, had made survival more than problematical. The generation which engaged in the war and flung away its lives by handfuls, was probably, of all ages in the history of the world, the one which had least real belief in a

world to come. The nails in sure places had given way. Man's instinctive trust in God and in His goodness to His creatures, and in His gift of life everlasting, had, over large areas of our European life, ceased to operate.

These young lives had gone, cut off in their prime, their promise unfulfilled, their names surviving in long lists, which presently would be meaningless, though a war memorial were placed in every church, in every market-place, on every village green. What had become of them? Were they living? Could we know? Could communications be opened with them?

Spiritualism, since its modern institution in America, less than a century ago, had maintained a steady existence, and had commanded the allegiance of many noble minds, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Professor Crookes, among the number, poets and scientists, persons with a religion and persons without. But now, in the heartache and the hopeless longing which the war had left, there came a great turning to the medium and the séance, to automatic writing, to any method which would establish some plausible contact with the dead, a contact which would prove that they were not dead but alive. And this recourse to a method which had been discredited by the frequent discoveries of imposture, and the candid portrait of Mr. Sludge the medium, was rendered respectable by the authority of highly respected names: Sir William Barrett, the president of the Psychical Research Society, who advocated the honest and scientific investigation of the undoubted phenomena; Sir

Oliver Lodge, the most distinguished name in contemporary science, who published an account of his converse with the son whom he had lost in the war; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, one of the most famous writers of the day, who was so convinced of the revelations of the medium and the séance, so sure of the value these revelations had for suffering and bereaved humanity, that he became a flaming apostle, and drew crowds to hear the new evidence that the dead live and that communication with them is possible. Spiritualism came in like a flood—it was now a Church, a cult—it threatened to take the place of Christianity unless the Churches would come to terms with it. Faith was no longer needed; here was sight, hearing, touch; no dubious dogmas, nor far-off events, nor distant prospects of a promised heaven were needed. Here were people, men, more frequently women, who could talk in intelligible words, and their voice would be the voice of the dead; here were faces at first dim and shadowy which would grow almost distinct and recognizable; here were forms which would materialize, and one could cut off a piece of the dress of the vanished friend, before he withdrew again behind the veil. Here you could set your hand on a paper, and it, your own hand, would be used to write long screeds by the unseen, but controlling, spirit of one supposed to be dead. The age of Faith was passing into the age of Sight. Things which eye had not seen, and ear had not heard, but which had entered into the heart of man to conceive, were now seen and heard and written and printed and published. Many were

comforted; they had conversed with their beloved dead; they were assured of their survival, and of their well-being; they found that their boys were there, as here, enjoying life, smoking cigarettes, and the rest of it: the gulf was crossed, the veil was pierced; life on the other side was very much what it is here. Our faith and unfaith, our godliness or godlessness continues. And out of that other world the great ones of the past would come to speak to us, subject only to the difficulty of expressing, through the material medium, the thoughts and the language which had distinguished them while they were in the body.

So welcome was this new revelation, this new religion, to many, that criticism was surrendered, and everything was eagerly and submissively believed. There were not wanting reasoned protests against this recrudescence of what in the ancient world was called Necromancy. Sir James Frazer, for example, after detailing the instances of the practice among Hebrews, Greeks, African Tribes, natives of New Guinea, the Malay Archipelago, the Eskimo, the Chinese, showing the wide diffusion and the great antiquity of what to-day is considered a new discovery, concludes his chapter on the Witch of Endor with a very caustic note: [1]

"Within the last seventy years there has been a recrudescence of necromancy among the civilized peoples of Western Europe and America. Those who care to follow the sordid history of the movement—a melancholy compound of credulity and fraud—will

[1] *Folk Lore in the Old Testament*, vol. iii, p. 554.

find it expounded, or rather exposed, with great frankness by Mr. Edward Clodd in his book *The Question* (London, 1917). It is to be feared that so long as the world lasts, there will always be an ample supply of knavery to meet the demand of folly. 'The credulity of dupes,' as Burke justly observed, 'is as inexhaustible as the invention of knaves.' "

But this judgment of the great comparative mythologist will not carry much weight. It is too sweeping. The classification of mankind into knaves and fools is too simple. With Sir William Barrett, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle before us, we know that it would be unpardonable to accept such a judgment without grave modifications.

And yet the perils of this modern necromancy are unmistakable.

No one recognizes this more than Sir William Barrett.[1] With all his faith in the possibilities of future inquiries, after years of research he has no positive good to show. But he has this earnest warning to give, which ought to be published far and wide :

" Very often I think we are apt to judge the medium too harshly. We must remember the abnormal condition and loss of self-control involved in mediumship, and surely it would be as unjust to charge a deeply entranced medium with conscious fraud as to accuse a somnambulist walking on a house-top of consciously jeopardizing his life. It is this weakening of self-control and personal responsibility on the part

[1] *The Threshold of the Unseen*, p. 259.

of a medium that constitutes, in my opinion, the chief peril of Spiritualism. Hence the steps of a novice need to be taken with care; even the level-headed should walk warily, and the excitable and emotional should have nothing to do with it; for the fascination of the subject is like a candle to moths, it attracts and burns the silly, the credulous and the crazy."

This frank and outspoken warning is not as effective as one would like it to be, because it is very hard to define, and still harder to recognize in oneself, the "excitable and the emotional." Those who are altogether beyond the terms of the definition would probably have no inclination to meddle with Spiritualism. And it is of no use to put up a warning to the "silly, the credulous and the crazy." Even in Bedlam it would attract no notice; every inmate would see at a glance that it referred only to those outside.

I have in my own immediate experience two instances in which Spiritualism has worked disaster in those who would certainly not be included in the classes that Sir William Barrett designated. I have seen a mind as strong and sane and good as any I ever knew unhinged by the practice of automatic writing, suddenly invaded by the sense of devils at work, passing through years of mental disturbance, at last recovering by the power of prayer and the reality of union with Christ. And the experience of those sorrowful years laid upon me the positive duty to warn every one who came under my influence against a practice so perilous

at the worst, and at the best so utterly useless and futile.

Again, I have seen a mind to all appearance sane and good, driven by the death of a son to seek communion with him through a medium, to seek and apparently to obtain it. But through this dubious channel came the abrupt command to break off all connection with the one friend who had been the constant helper and comforter in the bereavement. Even when a message came through this channel which was demonstrated on the spot to be false, the discovery of the fraud did not shake confidence in the authority or restore the ruthlessly shattered friendship.

I have no wish to collect instances of the unhappy results of Spiritualism, against which this high authority lifts up his warning ; nor would I on any account cast a slur on any comfort which has come in this way to mourning hearts. I do not for a moment question the *phenomena* which are examined and verified by the Psychical Research Society ; and the practice of necromancy in all parts of the globe, and in all history from the earliest recorded times, makes it absurd to brush aside the evidences which are offered to-day. I should be ready to accept the view that the prohibition of the practice in ancient Israel applied only to a prescientific era, when the undoubted dangers were not yet counteracted by the scientific spirit, and the rigid adoption of scientific tests. Strong and sane men like Sir Oliver Lodge may fruitfully examine all the revelations obtained in this way, and we may on their authority admit that new evidence has been collected

of the survival of the personality when the body has decayed; and the idea which Sir Oliver has made familiar to our generation, that the body does not make the soul, but the soul makes the body—and when this earthly tabernacle decays, can in a spiritual world gather to itself a spiritual body—is a welcome relief from the dead weight of Materialism. But what I venture to urge is that, leaving aside all those perils and pitfalls which Sir Oliver Lodge points out and warns us against, in consulting mediums or relying on séances, dark and light, the results obtained by this crepuscular method are not worth the trouble they entail. They are not only meagre, but curiously mixed and mean, often justifying Sir James Frazer's epithet—sordid.

The substitution of sight and hearing and touch for Faith has given us nothing new or important. And unhappily it has turned the attention of multitudes from Faith, and its far richer and larger and surer results.

If only the suffering and aching hearts that have resorted to Spiritualism for consolation would use the Master Faculty which is within their reach, they would find a comfort, a light, a knowledge, which Spiritualism at the best can never give. For Faith, as we have seen all along, is contact with the living God, the union of the limited, fragile, ignorant and feeble personality with that unlimited Personality (if the paradox may be allowed, and paradox is inevitable when finite speaks of infinite). That Divine Personality is not fragile and powerless, but almighty. That infinite power is also

infinite knowledge. And most wonderful of all He is Love. But when Faith brings the soul into vital union with God, so that God's thoughts penetrate the mind and God's Will moves the will, and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, a great and mastering revelation concerning those we have loved and lost dawns on the central consciousness which constitutes our personality. In the Love that is God is implied the life and continuance of all true love. God lives and is the God of the living ; the dead, as we call them, live unto Him. No supposed voices or forms of the dead appearing in a séance or struggling to speak through a medium can give anything like the assurance, the comfort and the peace which come from the direct contact with the living God, from His assurance "All souls are Mine"; from His persistent, pursuing, mastering love, which assures us of love's endurance and the powerlessness of many waters to quench it, or of death itself to destroy it.

We are disturbed by our inability to conceive *where* the spiritual life is, and what the conditions of it are. We may be anxious perhaps because that boy cut off in the prime of life had not led an irreproachable life, nor had he shown any sign of religious interest ; we may feel very doubtful about the extemporized dogma, that to lay down life for country and friends must be a complete absolution from all sin and an assured passport into heaven. But the only answer to these and the thousand and one other fears and misgivings which torment us is in God, the living God, the God who loves. Faith in Him, and that alone, builds the

sure City of Habitation, a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. To the agonizing question: Where is my boy—my lover? the only consoling answer is: With God who made, with Christ who redeemed him. His faults, his sins, his omissions can be brought to God and left with Him, in the absolute certainty that He is Mercy itself, Love itself. If it is not enough to die for your country to win eternal life, it is enough that Christ died for you; and the cruel suddenness and unexpectedness of death in war cannot alter that eternal fact. Christ is the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world.

Faith is not a belief about God; it is an experience of God. It is such a blending of the human with the divine, such a partaking of the divine nature, that the soul is in contact with the creative force, conscious of the power and the love that rule all things. When such a way of comfort, healing, power lies open before us, open to all, on terms so plain and simple—when such consolations of God are wide enough to cover all our sorrows and losses, it is a great mistake to turn elsewhere for what can only be found here. Even if I might converse, quite certainly, beyond all possibility of question, through the fullest authenticated medium, with my lost friend, fetched from his life of service and joy in the spiritual world, to meet me in that poor medium subjected to an "abnormal condition and loss of normal self-control involved in mediumship," as Sir William Barrett puts it, I should turn aside by preference to meet him through the mediumship of Christ. For here is a spiritual reality not abnormal, but in the

order and norm of the Divine Love : fellowship with Christ is a sure and blessed reality ; my friend is with Christ ; in fellowship with Christ I find him.

That Christians, and even very devoted Christians, sometimes miss this never-failing fountain of consolation, and either sink into melancholy and resentment, or betake themselves to the questionable ways of Spiritualism, must be due to that weakened and debased meaning of faith which too often passes current for the Master Faculty.

Many only mean by faith a belief in the immortality of the soul, or an assent to such metaphysical arguments as the dying Socrates used in the *Phædo* to show that in death he would not die, or the acceptance of some half-scientific statement such as Sir Oliver Lodge from time to time gives to the world :

" I consider it scientifically proved that mind is not inseparably linked with matter. We do not know how it is that mind is associated with matter at all, but here it is. Is the matter essential ? Can the memory and the character and the disposition, and all that makes an individual, survive the death of the body, the destruction of the brain ? I say yes. The brain is an instrument that we use here and now, constructed by the spirit, and used as an instrument for manifestation, for the display of ourselves to others. But we are not dependent on it ; we can go on without it. The pulpy matter that we call the brain is not ourselves ; that is not where ourself is ; that is not even where our memory is. It is an instrument for bringing out the memory as a violin or organ is an instrument for

bringing out the music; but the music is in the soul of Beethoven, and the soul of his hearers, in those who understand it, not in the mechanical arrangement which displays it or manifests it.

"We have the survival of the individual and the survival of the race. There is an infinite destiny before each individual. Think of that for a moment. Here we are in existence and we are not going out of existence. . . . When we leave the body behind, what do we take with us? Our memory, our character, for better for worse ourselves, and that is all we do take. . . . It is just as well to make yourselves worth living, when you have got to live on through all eternity."

Or at the best many people understand only a belief that Christ rose from the dead, and He said that He would on a day call the dead out of their sepulchres; or a belief, an argument at any rate, that a benevolent God would not leave such creatures as we are to perish.

If Faith meant only beliefs of this kind, it could not bring any profound consolation in bereavement; and yet it is to be feared that many Christian people know no other meaning, or value or power of faith.

From these ancient arguments and discussions, and bare beliefs, very little results. The argument for our immortality sways to and fro, from side to side, now triumphant, now defeated. Plato thought he had proved the soul's immortality. But the arguments he puts into the mouth of Socrates carry no weight with the mind of to-day. The doctors of the Church, at least some of them, accepted the doctrine from the

neo-platonists; but many sincere Christians, like my friend Edward White in his book *Life in Christ*, not only deny the soul's immortality, but regard the belief in it as the main hindrance to men coming to find life in Christ.

These argumentative beliefs, blowing hot and cold, going in and out with the changes of thought from age to age, bring but a pale assurance about the life of our friends who are gone, very little, indeed, about our own personal survival. They may drive us to seek and to exercise Faith, but they are very far from being in themselves faith. How little they carry consolatory conviction is shown by Mark Twain's wrath in his later years, because the thought of his time had taught him that we do not survive death, and when his children died he taught his wife the dismal doctrine, and then his wife died too! And in his desolation he cried out against the time, which had taken away his dead, and he knew not where it had laid them. It was a cruel time indeed in this modern world, which riddled all the arguments for life after death, and left its miserable children forlorn among the tombs. So little is real consolation produced, or capable of being produced, by beliefs however ingenious, by creeds however confident, by authorities however respected.

In the questioning of all creeds and beliefs, and religious dogmas, men, or perhaps one should say women, sought the séance and the medium, the Witch of Endor, the planchette, anything or anyone that would tell them that their dead live. How natural it

seems, how inevitable! In the twilight of the everlasting "pros" and "cons," what are aching hearts to do? They go to those who "chirp and mutter," the supposed spirits of the dead. They turn from the twilight to—the dark séance. But why do they not turn to God, the living God? Faith is not the acceptance of a number of beliefs, probable or even proved; it is not the hesitating assent to certain propositions or views, offered by philosophers, or imposed by Churches. Faith is the acceptance of God, the discovery of God, the vital union with God. And Faith is open to all who will use it. The living God is within touch of every living soul. Faith is God in the soul, living in the soul, working in the soul, illumining it, giving it His life, assuring it of His power, His sufficiency, His love. It is not belief in a God far off, who is to be brought down, brought near, before He can attend or act; it is touch with a God at hand, actually within:

> Nearer is He than breathing, closer than hands or feet.

This immediate, overflowing, all-convincing presence of God, is what gives to us our dead. This God, who is not the God of the dead but of the living, is the perpetual and omnipresent guarantee of the loves and the lives that He has created. As His divine life flows through us, and we are conscious that we live in Him and have our being in Him, we know, with the certainty with which we know ourselves, that the souls of the righteous are in His hands, and those we love are with Him. We perceive, as Abt Vogler perceived

in the revealing ecstasy of music—we are often nearer to God in music and in natural beauty than in our halting arguments and confused dogmas—

There shall never be one lost good! what was shall live as before,
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more;
On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round.
All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power,
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

Abt Vogler is a musician. But there are other melodists beside musicians. God is the Master Melodist, breathing out the music of creation, and every soul of man that has Faith and uses it, comes into the mighty harmony, utters a note in the great orchestra.

But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;
The rest may reason and welcome; but we musicians know.

Does the reader think what is here said of Faith illusion, self-delusion, what in the eighteenth century they spoke of disparagingly as enthusiasm? If so, I ask him to suspend judgment until I come to explain more particularly what Faith is, psychologically and theologically. But for the moment let me assure him that not only to me, but to a great number in all ages, Faith has been what I have implied, and has done

what here I have attributed to it. It has brought the unbounded consolation of God to the hearts which were like to break; it has opened up the real world, which is not accessible to the senses, and shown the life which succeeds this, and the innumerable hosts of those who have entered into it. Being a living contact with God it carries with it an assurance, a certitude, which can never be secured by the senses; it makes the things which really matter, the fundamental things of the spirit, surer than the conclusions, ever-varying, of science, or the soulless demonstrations of mathematics.

Once in the anguish of a great bereavement, which seemed to shatter life and to blot out the heavens, in that distress of soul which drives so many in our day to Spiritualism, I made certain discoveries, which afterwards I found, had been made by many before me.

> The gold was stolen from the coffer,
> The sword was stolen from the sheath,
> Life had but one more boon to offer,
> And that was death.

In that irremediable despondency, the spring of life seemed to snap, the object of living seemed to go. Then a voice came to me through a poet:

> Man shall not live by joy alone,
> But by the presence and the power of God.

Another voice sang to me from the high organ loft of a German Church, the great Markt Kirche, in Wiesbaden:

Durch die Finsterniss der Klagen
Bricht der Freüde Morgen-stern,
Bald wird auch dein Morgen tagen,
Gottes-Hilf ist nimmer fern.

It was a revelation in that murky gloom of sorrow. I had believed in God, but now by Faith I touched Him. Nimmer fern! nay quite close. His life pouring through me brought joy. Man shall not live by joy alone, but by the presence and the power of God. But the presence and power of God *were* joy, sometimes joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And the dear friend who had been snatched from my sight by death returned to me by faith, returned to me as Christ had returned after the Resurrection, returned to me in the Spirit, whose indwelling was Christ's return. I found *how* He had brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel.

And in this transforming and transfiguring experience I understood what had been happening all along since Christ rose, what was happening still on all sides where the blight of materialism had not fallen and the paralysis of unbelief had not crept in. There seemed to reach away into infinity the innumerable company of those who had lived in faith, had seen their best beloved die in faith, and at last had in faith melted into the azure, to live ever with God. I saw that this faith has not been the possession of a privileged few, but a gift of God to all men. I recognized how men had lived and died before Christ came, not *knowing* God as in Christ I know Him, but finding God, feeling God, living and dying. I saw how it might well be not a

legend, but a simple fact, that in the dawn of the world's life Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him. Moses and Elijah were no longer incredible to me, nor their appearance to Jesus on the mount. The worship of Heaven in ancient China, the mysterious revelations in the Baghavad-Gita, the serene confidence of Socrates as he drank the hemlock, and Plato's high and inspired myths of the unseen world, fell into line. God, my God, whose near and living presence and inbreathed life had brought me courage and hope in my great loss, and given me back my dead, alive for evermore, was the God of all the earth, of all the races, of all the ages, God had never left Himself without a witness. All souls were His; He had found them; they had found Him. He even allowed the veil, the dark veil of death, to be drawn over all nations, and established the common lot of death for all men, not, as we were apt to think, in wrath but in mercy, not to punish their sins but to save them from sin. I saw that death is always the gate of life; and by the death of our beloved we are drawn to God and to them:

> Dear, beauteous Death, the jewel of the just,
> Shining nowhere but in the dark.
> What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
> Could man outlook that mark!

CHAPTER IX

OTHER RELIGIONS AND FAITH

It is one of the services of Theosophy to draw attention to the many religions of mankind, and to find for them an underlying unity of plan and purpose. But this service is unhappily neutralized by two things. In the first place Theosophy tends to offer itself as a substitute for all the religions. The differences between the religions does not matter, because the theosophic revelation supersedes them all. The adept patronizes them all, and leaves them alone. Thus, in the second place, Theosophy is antagonistic to missions. In those exalted and inspired eyes a religion which claims to be superior to other religions is an impertinence. And yet, in spite of these drawbacks, we certainly owe to Theosophy a more vivid sense of truth in all religions, and of the common elements in them all which show how inevitable religion is, and with what a ceaseless urge of the Infinite through the Finite, God is making His way to men, and bidding them make their way to Him.

The Master Faculty, Faith, is at once the explanation why religions are all in some things alike, and why there is in religions a better and a worse, a best

and even a worst. This Master Faculty leads us to the opposite pole to that of Theosophy. We are drawn to the other religions because we know God, and we recognize with an intense sympathy that they all are feeling after Him, if haply they may find Him. But the missionary spirit, so far from being unnecessary, flames up into a passion. We would have all know Him, even as we do. And we recognize with inward pain how the minds of men are wrapped in dim superstitions, how they grope and do not find. If they knew Him they would love one another. How could fanaticism and persecution, and hatred, and cruelty survive the knowledge of Him? Only delusions about Him, and ignorance of Him, could produce the weary strife, and emptiness, and poverty of human life. God is the supreme missionary, and all who are in touch with Him share His mission work.

That in all religions there are common elements; that in the myths or tales which gather about the origins there is a curious similarity; that even the great ideas and events in which religions seek to express themselves, seem copied from one another; that, in a word, religion is so curiously one, not many, a single great factor in human life; may be used as an argument, often is used as an argument, to discredit, or at least to depreciate a particular religion.

But so soon as the mind grasps the idea of God, as God can only be, One, the source and object of all human life; so soon as that vital contact with God is effected, by which the life and thought of God play freely through us; these facts, which Comparative

Religion makes familiar to us, begin to wear a very different aspect; things which seemed at first to discredit presently become a startling argument for religion.

Sir James Frazer has crowned his labours in anthropology by three great volumes in which he traces the stories of the Old Testament in other religions, the same or similar. As in the *Golden Bough* he followed up the story of the Priest slaying and succeeding his predecessor at Aricia, until all religions, including the story of the Cross, seemed to centre in that one idea of vicarious sacrifice, so now he brings all the stories of Creation, and the Fall of Man, and the Flood, etc., from all races, civilized and uncivilized, past and even present, to show that man, as man, gives much the same account of his origins, his coming to be, the beginning of sin, the need to be forgiven, the way to be restored.

Of course, any one interested in discrediting the Bible, and there always seem to be many such—Why? is a question worth putting and pressing—may say this story of Creation is found in all races and languages. The Serpent and the Fall belong to the common stock of primitive thought. The Library of Asshurbanipal has given us the Epic of Creation, and the Epic of the Flood, with obvious resemblances to the Biblical story. But, suppose we are not interested in discrediting the Bible, but deeply interested in seeing the truth of things, we see the stories of Genesis, as coming from the common stock of human tradition, or fancy, or mythopæic faculty, and assuming a form, acquiring a tone, different from the form and the tone of Babylon

or Egypt. In that difference the interest lies ; but in that common stock of human lore and conjecture is a decisive argument for this, that man cannot help asking how he came to be, what is his relation to the power that made him, how has he got out of harmony with that power ; how can he recover the harmony and be at one with Him.

There are, in the same way, many writers to-day, both inside and outside the Church, who find a delight in showing that the story of Jesus in the Gospels, the virgin-birth, the slaughter of the innocents, and then the whole tragedy of the Cross, belong to the common stock of human myth-making. Stories of miraculous birth and deliverance gather round the name of any great teacher, Buddha as well as Christ ; ideas which form the substance of the Christian Gospel, find an echo, sometimes an exact parallel in Buddhism, even in Hinduism ; nay, Islam itself adapts and applies the story of Christ and His Cross.

What is the inference to be drawn ? That the life of Christ and the truth of Christ are of no value, because all human life is, as it were reverberating with these sounds, seeking to find expression for these ideas ?

Or is the inference not rather this : that everywhere, in all the records of history and tradition, there is one intense need, one crying demand. In all forms of religion, in all strenuous thought, there is the struggle of man to be at one with God, the *φυγὴ τοῦ μόνον πρὸς τὸν μόνον* as Plotinus called it ? We must get back to God ; my little personality must find its rest

and fulfilment in conscious union with Him; that is the underlying, unfailing need of humanity. All religious ideas work on that line. All rites and mysteries spring from that motive. Theologies, the loftiest and the lowest, are alike in the object which presents itself irresistibly to men as such. That some Buddha will come, and throw light on that Return to the Source; that some Zarathustra will explain and settle the conflict between Ormuzd and Ahriman; that some divinities will appear under forms however strange to bring the soul to Brahma; that some Prophet will cry from the desert and sweep away the idolatries, and the polytheism, with the cry God is One; this is the story of all religions new and old. And it is this great underlying common factor, which brings us all together as men. It does not discredit, but it strongly affirms the Christian religion, that it is like the rest. For God is One, and all men must seek Him, feel after Him, if haply they may find Him. But what gives Christianity its peculiar claim, and imposes on it an unflagging missionary task is that here, coming out of the common elements is something distinctive, a religion which grows out of history, a Person who comes in space and time, belonging to history, and yet bringing to us out of the spiritual and eternal world clear ideas, where all was confusion, and spiritual power where all was impotent.

Christianity can only claim the attention of the world, if, in fair comparison with other religions, it can show its superiority. Christianity can only advance and win the world if those who receive it are loyal to

it, and are ready to sacrifice in making it known. In the present epoch of change and unsettlement there is a hesitation, a lukewarmness, an indifference among those who bear the Christian name, which forms a strange contrast to the passionate loyalty of Hindus and Moslems. The movement which we desire and for which we should think, and toil, and pray, is a demonstration on the one hand of the distinctive truth and power and effect of Christianity, which would convince the world that here is the best the world possesses, here is the highest which man seeing must love ; and a convincing power, on the other hand, which will make all who profess and call themselves Christians ardent, enthusiastic, and active in commending their faith to others. The two things are in reality one ; for if it is made plain that in Christianity we have the highest and purest religion in the world, those who even nominally are included in Christendom must grip the truth, which is the world's truth, and must feel more than a lukewarm interest in uniting the world in the truth. Let us, then, bring to mind in broad outline rather than in elaborate detail, what it is which gives to Christianity its superior value and power in comparison with what may be called its sister religions.

In the first place, it was in a singular way the product of a long historic process. It grew, in the way that all things of lasting value grow. A People of God emerged in Palestine at the meeting of the three continents, and for fifteen hundred years it passed through a discipline and a development, guided by prophets, men and women who with direct inspiration led or tried to lead

the people in the ways and truth of God. Through the work of the prophets God became very distinct to this people first as the God of this peculiar people, but last as the God of all the earth. This people of God was the servant of God, and in its institutions, and religious truth, it was in some way to bless the whole of humanity. The first distinctive mark of Christianity is its emergence from such a historic process, such a trained and disciplined people. It could start with that history, with that prophetic literature, in its hands. Its earliest credentials lay in the preparation, and the anticipation, in the word of God working through ages, that finally it, the Word, might embody itself in One that was to come.[1]

He came. And what He was when He came, through the few years of a brief human life, became the distinctive and unique possession of Christianity. It is the Person of Christ, as it appeared to His disciples, and through their memoirs, still appears to us, that slowly, but surely has been recognized as the world's greatest religious possession. With no disparagement to the great spiritual leaders who came before Him, Buddha, Confucius, Laotze, Zoroaster, or of those who have come after Him, Mohammed, and the other very numerous persons, men and women, who have appeared to supplement or to correct His teaching, we are bound in all candour to recognize that He stands alone. There is none at all like Him, in the clearness and

[1] This is the theme of Dr. H. F. Hamilton's powerful book, *The People of God ; an Inquiry into Christian Origins* (Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press).

certainty of the truth He gave us, in the morality which He taught and inspired, in the positive revelation of God to us, and reconciliation of us to God, which He showed us in Himself, and made possible to us in receiving Him.

In contrast with the three million gods of Hinduism, in contrast with the no-God of Buddhism,[1] in contrast with the vague Heaven of Confucius, in contrast with the hard unity of Mohammed's Allah, there is something of overwhelming charm and power in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the simple statement, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," in the truth that God is love, in the directness of the union between the individual and God, and in the implied relation of all individuals to one another.

This truth of Christ has won its way in the world, and is winning its way to-day in China, in Japan, in India. Apart from the claim of particular Churches, the Person of Christ goes forth conquering and to conquer.

I met in Baroda a Hindu judge, who was reported to be a great authority on Hinduism. I ventured to ask him what was the principal doctrine of Hinduism. He replied at once "The Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of men."

In this way Christ is penetrating Hinduism and all other religions. When Ghandi announced to a great throng of his admirers and followers that he owed

[1] Edmund Holmes, in *The Creed of Buddha*, maintains that Gotama undoubtedly believed in God, but taught a life which would lead to the unknown, and indescribable deity. This may be; but the recorded teaching of Buddha leaves God out.

most to one who had never trodden the soil of India, viz. Christ, he expressed what is going on in the world to-day. Just so far as Christ is made known He wins His way. The institutions which have grown about His name; the doctrines and beliefs which different groups of people connect with Him, may fail to impress the world; and the Christian Church may be compelled to revise or to surrender them. But no observer of the whole world can fail to see that what is gaining ground, and spreading in ever-widening circles, is precisely that which is the distinctive characteristic of the Christian religion, that which unites all who seem outwardly separated, the Jesus of History, the Christ who ever since Jesus lived and died, has lived and worked in the life of men.

When in due time the world is penetrated by Christ, and the nations have recognized in Him their greatest spiritual treasure, the nominally Christian people will at last show their allegiance. The shame of religious indifference which is at present like a blight over the fair field of Christendom will pass away.

But the question must often occur, Why does this consummate truth and power which we call Christianity make such slow progress, advance with so hesitating steps, and often recede and lose ground, giving place to the lower and less elevated forms of life and worship? Why did Islam sweep away Byzantine Christianity? Why was North Africa the home of Tertullian, of Cyril, of Athanasius, of St. Augustine, submerged beneath the tide of the Crescent? And in these later centuries why did the fires of the

Reformation die down, and the Reform reach no further than its first impulse, receding even from parts which it had at first occupied? The question is not so hard to answer as at first it might seem. The answer is essentially always one. That pure, simple, irresistible religious force which constituted, and always must constitute, the distinctive character of Christianity, was blended with other influences, other beliefs, other religions, and its power was lost. The resurgence of Judaism was a danger overcome in the first age by the magnificent conviction of St. Paul. But the resurgence of the older religions of Asia, and of Hellenism, and of the Imperial power of Rome, was not so easily resisted.

The pure faith of Christ lost its power in Greek metaphysics, in Eastern forms of asceticism, and dualism, and most of all in the Imperial conception of Christianity as a religious Roman Empire, with an autocratic, semi-divine authority at the head and the old Roman idea of Imperial subjection:

Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos

brought into the sphere of religion.

It is always the gradual substitution of other ideas, other objects of devotion, other intrinsic religious principles, for that pure, divine truth which was the light of the world, that arrested, and still arrests, the great promised victory.

It is not always so glaring a substitution as when in a Neapolitan Church it is argued that Mary is the mother of God, and more honour is due to the mother

than to the child, or when by a similar subtlety it is urged that prayers should be addressed to Joseph, because Mary as a dutiful wife would do what her husband commands. But in one form or another this is what is always happening. Attention is diverted from that purity and simplicity of Christ which are the distinctive and omnipotent forces of the Christian religion, and directed to secondary or contradictory things. The pure flame is made fuliginous, the clear water is made turbid. Now it is the Vicar of Christ who takes the place of Christ. Now it is the Bible, with all its difficulties and problems that is obtruded ; now it is some doctrine over-emphasized, a doctrine of atonement, or of sanctification, or of a Second Coming. And by this obtrusion of other thoughts and interests men are prevented from seeing in its amazing clearness and feeling in its overwhelming power, that religious reality which makes the distinction of Christianity.

It is here that the neglect and misuse of the Bible work such havoc with Christianity. Put the Bible in place of Christ, and demand for all that is contained in it the same authority that you demand for Christ, and it hinders the mind from seeing Christ in His uniqueness and authority. But withhold the Bible, neglect the Bible, forget the Bible, and you obscure that great luminous fact of history : the People of God trained and prepared by prophets to be the servant of God, issuing in Christ as that person in whose life and word and work lies the salvation of the world.

Yet in spite of all the blunders and perversions and accretions, the quarrels and the divisions, the persecu-

tions and the cruelties perpetrated in the name of the Church, and in the supposed service of Christ; this truth of Christ in its purity and power has made and is ever making its way. In our time we have seen it penetrate New Guinea, and turn head-hunters and cannibals into Christians and missionaries. We have seen it going through the Dark Continent from end to end, building a great church in Uganda, redeeming the cannibals of the Congo; transforming the warrior Metabele and Zulu into followers of Jesus of Nazareth; producing in Khama an African Christian of a type seldom seen among the rulers of Christendom. We have seen this pure flame of the love of Christ entering Japan, China, India, producing in those ancient civilizations just such saints as it produced when first it entered Europe; Toyohiko Kagawa in Japan, a living St. Francis; or Sadhu Sundar Singh, in India, called, ordained, used in the service of Christ in a way as remarkable as St. Paul.

And in every part of Christendom, in every Church, and outside the Churches, that living and transforming power of Christ is constantly at work. The Kingdom of God comes without observation; but if we watch and consider, we find that the most wonderful and steady force in the world to-day is the advance of Christ towards His sovereign and universal power.

But drawing back for a moment from this survey of the religions of the world in their relations and antagonisms, in their powers and weaknesses, we may note how faith laying hold of God, in vital union with God, conscious of God's life in the soul, and of His universal

activity, surveys the chequered scene with a richer understanding, and traces the process of the world, which is nothing less than the sure establishment of God's Kingdom upon earth. Every religion is man's effort to get at God, to find the right relation with Him. Even the non-religions, which seem so numerous to-day, are revolts from perverted and unsatisfying religious systems. When a generation ago M. Guyau wrote his *Non-religion of the Future*, it will be remembered how, before the book was at an end, he unconsciously slipped back into religion. Men are irreligious only because the religions presented to them do not suit them. But with an unswerving purpose and a relentless pursuit, God is in search of us all. Through the most imperfect forms and conceptions He reaches and finds us. This God whom I have found, with whom I am in touch, I find is seeking all, is getting into touch with all. Christ has brought me to Him; and Christ is bringing the rest to Him.

I watched once the devotees on the steps and in the river at Benares. I saw the bowed heads and the rapt faces, as they offered their pujah to the Unseen. I felt that to the God whom I know in Christ that crowd of seekers and worshippers must be dear. If I was revolted by the images of Siva and Kali, by the Monkey God and the Elephant God, and the impure sculptures on one of the temples, yet I could not fail to see in those devout faces that hunger for God which God will not allow to go unsatisfied. And I have seen Moslems in their mosque, leaving their shoes outside to tread the holy ground, bowing down in worship, led by their

imâm ; and I must feel, do all I could, that there was worship there. And what is equally surprising, I have heard atheists raging against God, launching out in tirades against the faith of Christendom ; and I have seen in them the demonstration of the God, and the Christ, whom they were denying. God whom we touch by faith is everywhere at work in His world, is seeking, meeting, finding human beings, always in every way. Faith brings a quiet confidence about the issue. " All souls are mine," He says. He will not let them go.

Only, if the vision induces quietism, and the easy view that God will find His own through all the religions and non-religions of the world ; immediately the God whom I know by faith unveils His thought, and utters His call, " Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Here is this divine privilege to be a fellow-worker with God. Here is Christ, come into the world as a missionary from Heaven, allowing me to be an ambassador for Him, ready to use me in carrying out that world-embracing mission on which He came.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IX

A crucial instance may illustrate the position maintained in this chapter.

In modern Japan the largest and most influential sect of Buddhism is that of Shinshu, founded by Shinran in the twelfth century of our era. Shinshu demands a single Divine Being, and finds him in Amida, as the one and only Buddha. Salvation is obtained by faith alone, faith in Amida-Buddha, though good works are also required. The candidate for Paradise who has virtue and good works to his credit, as well as a strong faith, will be placed in a higher class than one who has gained Paradise through faith alone. Amida is a magnificent product of the idealizing imagination. He was presumably a king living in a remote antiquity. A vow he made is the basis of the cult: "When I become Buddha, let all living beings of the ten regions of the universe maintain a confident and joyful faith in me: let them concentrate their longings on a rebirth in my Paradise; and let them call upon my name, though it be only ten times or less; then provided only that they have not been guilty of the five heinous sins, and have not slandered or vilified the true religion, the desire of such beings to be born in my Paradise will surely be fulfilled. If this be not so, may I never receive the perfect enlightenment of Buddha-hood." A man who calls on that name for even a single day may face death with serenity, because Amida attended by a host of celestial bodhisats will assuredly appear before his dying eyes, and carry him away to a joyful rebirth in the Pure Land.

In the beautiful Hongwanji cathedral of Kyoto, Amida is the chief object of worship, and his praise is sung in such a hymn as this:

> Eternal Father, on whose breast
> We sinful children find our rest,
> Thy mind in us is perfected
> When on all men thy love is shed;
> So we in faith repeat thy praise,
> And gratefully live out our days.

The similarity here to the Christian doctrine of justification by faith is obvious, though the dissimilarities appear on reflection. Amida is not an historical person, nor a Saviour. He does not come for God, nor bear the sins of the world. Faith in him is only trust that he will take one who calls on his name to his Paradise. The dissimilarity is between Amida and Christ. The similarity is in the salvation by faith, and in the promise of Heaven.

This modern and popular Buddhism seems far removed from the teaching and the practice of Gotama. But the question raised in this chapter is, Does this similarity of Amida discredit or confirm Christ ?

Once we should have treated it as a travesty of the Christian Faith, and explained it as the probable result of Japanese students coming into contact with Western Christianity.

But to-day, in modern missionary circles, the view would be that the cult of Amida-Buddha confirms Christianity. It shows the need of men for a salvation by faith, and not by works, as Buddha taught. It shows how the heart, in ignorance of Christ, tries to invent a divine-human Saviour.

It suggests that in Japan to-day men may find in the Gospels Him whom they had worshipped as Amida.

Historical and documentary evidence proves that Christ was a real person, an actual human being who lived His life among men, and spoke with knowledge of His unseen Father. He is not " the magnificent product of the idealizing imagination." But the worshippers of Amida may find their way the more readily to the historic Jesus because Shinran in the twelfth century conceived the story of Amida, and built upon it a spiritual hope and a devout cult.[1]

[1] For an interesting account of Amida-Buddha, see the Rev. F. W. S. O'Neill's recent book, *The Quest for God in China*, pp. 53–61 (Allen and Unwin).

CHAPTER X

MISSIONS FAR AND NEAR

A CONSIDERABLE change has come over the scope and intention of missions since Carey went to India, and John Williams to the South Seas, and Robert Morrison to China. The change is due to the comparative study of religions, and the comparative study owes much to the missionaries.

I remember when James Legge came to Oxford to be the first professor of Chinese after a strenuous missionary life, in which he had translated a good many of the Chinese classics, he amused us all by speaking as if it was Oxford and not China that stood in the greater need of the Gospel, and he spoke so effectively about the truth and beauty of the Chinese classics and the virtues of the Chinese people, that he was hardly felt to be an advocate of missions at all. But that well represented the change which a century of missions produced. The earlier missionaries, especially in the South Seas, Madagascar and South Africa, felt that they were carrying to degraded and barbarous tribes a truth which would save them from mutual destruction and cruel superstitions, witchcraft, devil worship and other obviously injurious practices. Carey, horror-

stricken by the sight of suttee, was moved by a pure philanthropy to save the widow from her fate. In China it was the hardness of heart, throwing away unwanted girl babies, and binding girls' feet, that made the immediate appeal. Missionaries were messengers of mercy, going into the dark places of the earth, full of the habitation of cruelty, with the truth of Divine Love and the suggestion of human brotherhood. But the impression was that the whole world, outside Christianity, was in the wicked one, that all the religions were false, superstitions and impositions. The missionary had nothing to do with these abominations, but to denounce and to destroy them, as Israel was commanded to root out the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth.

Those early heroisms which opened India and China and Africa and the South Seas were certainly the result of Faith; but the Faith was not always that master faculty which unites us with God, and enables Him to use us in His way. The idea that God had made all the nations and peoples and left them to destruction, casting them into Hell because they did not know Him, was a fatal hindrance to the working of Divine Love, and the demonstration of that power which wins and woos the soul of man. Little as those earlier missionaries realized it, they could not succeed in their great enterprise until Faith in God brought them the assurance that God never left Himself without a witness, and that even the most elementary efforts of men to find God were an evidence that God was there. The earlier missionary efforts were also hampered by

the supposed necessity of carrying to the East or to the South the institutions and ecclesiastical organization which had grown up in Europe. The Jesuit missions, with all their devotion and immediate success, had this fatal drawback, they were seeking to impose upon other peoples, in the name of Christianity, an authority, an order, a discipline which even Europe itself could not bear. In Japan, for instance, they aroused such a fierce antagonism, that they were expelled, and for two hundred years Japan rigorously excluded any Christian teacher.

And even when no attempt was made to impose a church system, the London Missionary Society, or the China Inland Mission, carried, unconsciously no doubt, theological systems and dogmatic beliefs, products of Western development, which might have no value for the new peoples to whom the message was brought. It has been a slow and very difficult process to see and to distinguish, to present the truth of Christ disencumbered of the accretions which have gathered round it; to liberate that truth, to work in new surroundings and new peoples with the creative power which produces suitable modes of expression, and builds up valid and serviceable institutions.

But the great hope of our time, a hope which has been growing brighter ever since the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, is that missions have entered on a new phase. In Protestantism at any rate these three principles are now recognized as the necessary condition of successful work:

1. The truth in other religious systems must be

studied and sympathetically known. The Christian Gospel is to be presented as the fulfilment of what those systems were aiming at. "I came not to destroy but to fulfil" was Christ's attitude to the Jewish Law. It is His attitude to all other laws.

In this we return to that early Alexandrine School, which was unhappily overborne by the growth of Western Theology. Clement of Alexandria taught that Greek Philosophy—he was thinking of Platonism and neo-Platonism—was a schoolmaster to bring the Greeks to Christ, as the Law was to bring the Jews. God, our God, the God whom we know by Faith, is in the world, has never left the world; is pressing in on the souls of all His creatures, claiming them, loving them. And these religious systems are genuine efforts, however imperfect, to respond to Him. And our own religious system, yes, even the Christian faith, the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the faith in God which He gives us, is still imperfect and blundering. When we have done all, we are unprofitable servants. When we, to the best of our powers, present Christ, the treasure is in earthen vessels. Though we know Christ is perfect, and the desire of all nations, we humbly recognize that our presentation of Him is not; and they who do not know Him are often nearer to Him than we who do.

2. We are very slow to impose our beliefs and practices and institutions on other races, or to imply that they are essential to the truth of Christ which we are trying to convey. Rome is bound by her changeless principle to insist on her developed system as

identical with Christianity. But we are equally bound by our faith in Christ and our sense of His uniqueness, not to impose anything which will be an obstacle to India, China, Japan, in receiving Him.

3. We realize therefore that the object in view is to raise up in each land an indigenous Church, a native ministry, a missionary spirit, which will evangelize the people in the ways which missionaries from without can hardly hope to understand.

These principles lay upon the modern missionary the sacred task of bringing out in indisputable clearness the distinctive element of Christianity—which is Christ. To preach Christ to all nations is the work which has to be resumed, not from the Reformation, not from the Middle Ages, but from Apostolic times. As Paul preached Christ in Philippi, Corinth, Rome, Ephesus, and was bent on preaching Him as far as the Pillars of Hercules, so, in full view of our widened knowledge of the world, of anthropology, of the religions of men, we have to preach Christ to China, Japan, India, Africa and all the islands of the sea.

It is the danger of putting our systems and theologies in front of Christ's message when we approach non-Christian races, which makes the Bible itself such an invaluable missionary agency. The Bible Society is spoken of as an aid to the missionary societies, which always acknowledge their debt to it. But it is more than that. It is itself a missionary society, free from some of the drawbacks which weaken the other societies. The Bible, translated as faithfully as possible into the vernacular, and circulated without note or

comment, carries the truth of God, and the Gospel of Christ wherever it goes. It is innocent of all the creeds and dogmas and ecclesiastical institutions which play so large a part in our religious life. It speaks, as it were, from heart to heart, from God's heart to man's. It speaks for itself if it is allowed to do so. Let it be presented without any theory of what it is, it quickly produces in the reader its own theory. The difficulties which people in Christendom find in it all arise from a wrong theory about it, which prejudices the reader's mind. When it comes fresh and unexplained to an unprejudiced mind it makes its own sure impression. It was a Bible dropped accidentally from an American ship in Nagasaki Bay which introduced Christianity into Japan, and had produced believing Christians before Verbeck arrived to begin his mission work. It was the opening verse of the Bible which carried conviction to Joseph Neesima, Japan's first apostle, the founder of Doshisha. Brought up in a Buddhist home and wondering what good it was to offer the food to the little idols on the shelf, he felt the whole light of God break into his soul when he read : " In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This was the truth for which he had waited, the truth which Buddhism did not know. And when on his voyage to America he found in St. John's Gospel how belief in our Lord Jesus Christ brought him to God, he had experienced in the most vivid way the missionary effect of the Bible.

It is unfortunate that when the missionary comes he interprets the book in a way which makes it impossible

for the mind which has not been trained in our Western civilization. It is unfortunate that our scholarship, while it removes some difficulties creates others. But the experience of the Bible Societies for a hundred years has shown that the Bible left to do its own work succeeds. It is true as Christ said, speaking of the Old Testament writings, "These are they which testify of Me." Constantly as to the two on the road to Emmaus, beginning from Moses and the prophets, He expounds the things in the Scriptures which concern Himself. Then the Gospel narratives present Christ. No lives of Christ present Him better, and the rest of the New Testament shows Him living, dead, alive for evermore, so that in these writings He is with us to the end of the world.

It is curious how the Western Church, while relying on the Scriptures as its supreme authority, has refused to use this authority as a missionary agency. A new day will dawn for the world when his Holiness the Pope commands that every Christian should be taught to read and use the Bible. It cannot be too strongly stated: the difficulties which our own people find in our Bible; their indifference to it; their assaults upon it; are entirely due to wrong presuppositions, dogmatic and arbitrary ways of handling the Book, the impression that it may not be read by the light of common sense, the notion that discrepancies or contradictions must be denied or glozed over, that its primitive science must override all the subsequent discoveries of science, that it represents a complete and consistent moral code, and not a history of the growth of moral conceptions,

that it is a systematic theology, instead of the account of God's age-long developing revelation of Himself to men. These misleading ideas neutralize the Bible for our own people and rob it of interest. Very few people in this country read it with zest and assiduity. In every cottage the large family Bible lies unopened in the parlour, or hidden away in some obscure corner. The newspaper, even the sporting and betting news, offer superior attractions to our population. But when it comes in a good translation to a people that has not known it, it arrests and fascinates, teaches and converts, very much as Tyndale's translation took possession of us in the sixteenth century, and in the version of 1611 became the greatest formative influence of our national life. If we had faith in God, we should give this Book to the whole world, and stand by and see the salvation of God. We should give the Book to the nations without making any misguided and misleading claim for it. We should only say: This is the Book which tells us of Christ, and Christ is the Word of God. Here you find what Christianity is, how it grew out of a long past, deep rooted in the life of the People of God, how it reaches out to gather in all peoples, until at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess Him to be Lord.

But nothing hinders the great missionary work so fatally as the fact that we who are nominally Christian have not yet applied the Christian truth to our ordinary life and the constitution of our society. We send out the Bible and the missionaries to India and China, but when Indians and Chinese come to visit us they are

dismayed. Is this a Christian society? they ask. Is this the effect of Christianity on a nation? These perpetual conflicts between capital and labour; these glaring contrasts between rich and poor; these crowds seeking amusement at all costs; these empty churches; this religious indifference which makes it the rarest thing for an Indian or a Chinese visitor to hear a word about Christ, or to see any evidence of Christ's Spirit—is this Christianity?

We must expect Moslems and Hindus and Buddhists to send missionaries to us. Our vast godless, unworshipping, unspiritual multitudes will move the compassion of all the living religions of the world. However beautiful Christ and Christianity appear in the Bible, these Christian populations seem dead to the faith they hold, traitors to the Christ whom they should obey. The mingling of the races, and the comparison of the religions, have brought this home to us. A movement has begun which is to Christianize Christendom. As the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 opened a new era in missions abroad, the conference held in April 1924 in Birmingham, opened, we trust, a new era in the application of Christianity to our life, industry, mutual relations at home. The Conference on Politics, Economics and Citizenship, which is known by the initials of these words as C.O.P.E.C., was the attempt of all the Churches in this country in council to find out how the truth of God, which we as Christians hold, should bear on our family life, our education, the relation of the sexes, our industry, our trade, our treatment of other countries. The one

object was to put Christ into possession of our complex and elaborate society.

There are critics like Dean Inge who deride the whole attempt, and treat as pharisaical the humble trust of those who met in the confidence that the Spirit of God was with them guiding them into truth. But in this movement a mighty hope has arisen. It is a grain of mustard seed, but it may grow into a tree which covers the earth. This at least has already been accomplished: there is a widespread and growing conviction that Christ is a living, present power, who is able to bring into harmony and beauty the apparently conflicting elements of human society. Some only go so far as to say that none but Christ can do this, and failing Him mankind must continue to struggle on in the chaos of unlimited competition, in the everlasting conflict of class with class, and nation with nation. Christ could do it—so far, and only so far, many begin to see. But others are reaching the conviction that Christ is going to do it. The hour has struck. The time has come, foretold by prophets and by Christ Himself, when the whole of human life, and all the races of the human family, will come under Christ's authority and be governed by His Law. What was figuratively described as His coming on the clouds of Heaven, and subduing all the world to His rule, is just what appeared in vision to C.O.P.E.C., the actual direction of human life by that very Christ who lived His brief life, endured His sacrificial death, and passed to the throne of God, at the beginning of our epoch. The Kingdom of God is coming; the *reign of Christ*, the subjection of all our

life from birth to death, of all our institutions, secular and religious, of all nations and peoples throughout the earth and to that Holy Spirit of peace and goodness and love which found embodiment in Christ for those few earthly years, but passed on, through Him, to work in the travailing ages, until the Kingdom of God should come, and the will of God should be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

Those twelve laborious commissions, which prepared the material for the Conference are in our hands, with some report of the discussions which took place on them. Here is a body of knowledge and suggestion which we must read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. We are no longer left in the vague, beating the air. Here we are shown how Christ, through the Spirit, would transform our social life, our work, our relation with other nations. We see how to begin and what to aim at. But best of all we gain the conviction that it can be, it must, it will be done. The time is coming when Christendom will no longer be a stumbling block to the nations in the way of receiving Christianity, but it will be itself the irrefutable argument to all the peoples for becoming Christian.

Retreat from the distractions and discouragements of the world into Faith, and a sublime vision opens before the soul. When Faith has brought a real contact with God, a sense of His sufficiency, of His power, of His patience, of His love, of His purpose, the whole outlook of the world at home and abroad undergoes a transformation. As from some high peak of thought one sees the reality and the

movement of things. It is an encouragement that Henry Vaughan had that vision :

> I saw Eternity the other night
> Like a great ring of pure and endless light
> All calm, as it was bright :
> And round beneath it Time, in hours, days, years,
> Driven by the spheres,
> Like a vast shadow moved ; in which the World
> And all her train were hurled.

And what heartened George Fox for his life of witness, with all its toils and hardships and sufferings, was a vision in which he saw the dark shadow of the world and its ways encircled by the Eternal Light. Such a vision may be granted to our Faith, at any time, if we dwell quietly in the thought of God. For there plainly is the One God, all Light, and in Him is no darkness at all ; all Love, hating nothing that He has made ; all Power, able to conceive in thought, and to achieve in deed, a world that moves and grows evolving into light and love like His own. He is at work in the whole process of evolution ; He has ordered the slow progress, the varieties, the divisions, the struggle, the victory, we know not why ; but we partly understand it, because our own growth from infancy to childhood and to maturity is just such a development. We see God everywhere encompassing mankind, as the atmosphere the earth. And as light spreads and penetrates wherever it is admitted, we see God soliciting entrance into every chink of human nature. We see that religions are the result of this pressure of God upon humanity, though they are

determined by the responsiveness or the development of the varied races and orders of men. Everywhere, in all ages, countries and religions, there are a few who gladly let Him in. Some are mystics, but many more are ordinary workaday human beings. As William Penn says: "The humble, meek, merciful, just, pious and devout souls are everywhere of one religion; and when death has taken off the mask, they will know one another, though the divers liveries they wear here make them strangers."

We see God everywhere thus entering so soon as His children let Him. His witness is ubiquitous. Plato finds God, so does Chu-Hsi, so does Al-Ghazzali. God searches out and finds all who are willing to admit Him. We see all the varied systems of religion, the thought of the thinkers, the acts of the worshippers, as the response of men, more or less imperfect, to the insistent God. In the ethical thought of China, in the apparent atheism of Buddhism in the pantheism of India, in the animism of Africa, in the materialism and mammonism of Europe and America, in the stupendous system of Catholicism, in the stagnation of Holy Russia, in the broken lights of Protestantism struggling for religion not divorced from freedom, for theologic truth combined with ethical progress; in all the varied and often contradictory conceptions of life and conduct which men entertain, we see our poor humanity making such response as it can to that steady, unceasing, indefatigable pressure of God upon it. And by Faith, by the experience of God within, we are persuaded that God is getting home, God is working out His plan;

the process so obscure sometimes to us is plain and sure to Him. We know that by whole-hearted reception of God into our own hearts and lives we can do something to further His great design. By faith and contact with God we surmount the discouragement which Christendom, and the condition of Christian society, produces.

From this high standpoint of the thought of God we see Christianity as one among the religions, subject to the blindness and to the corruption, to the hypocrisy and the spiritual deadness of humanity, which is not evolved, but only evolving. God, we feel, is more disappointed with Christendom than we are; He is disappointed, because Christendom has the knowledge of Christ, and the supreme revelation of Divine Love and Goodness. But at the same time, He knows, and He teaches us, that the higher truth takes longer to penetrate, and while it reaches and masters a few, the many who reject it and will not or cannot receive it, become a dead weight of hindrance and opposition, which is in many ways harder to move and to convince than the heathen who have not heard.

And thus the tangle of society in Christendom, the injustice, the unnecessary suffering, the unbridled greed and lust, the relentless selfishness and pitiless competition, which have cried out for C.O.P.E.C., do not produce despair, but rather hope. Because we have Christ we become aware of the Christlessness in Christendom. Because we have Christ we can go forward undismayed to cope with the abuses, and rectify the mistakes, which in His light we are bound

to confess and deplore. This Master Faculty, God's greatest gift to us, sets things in due proportion and perspective. The supreme fact is God. So overwhelmingly important and dominant is that fact that all the ignorance and superstition and brutality and selfishness of man, are only a shadow in that eternal light. The supreme fact of God, high above, deep within, penetrating, controlling and directing all, the fact revealed by faith, shows all the errors and crimes of humanity as a mote in the sunbeam.[1] As our globe itself is a speck in the solar system, and our solar system itself is but one of the smallest among the myriad systems that illumine the night, so the confusion and darkness, the ignorance, the folly, the brutality, the vanity, the frivolity, the uncleanness of the world are insignificant in comparison with the fact of God, and the fact of man. Man, as yet so imperfectly developed, so hardly disentangled from his earthly matrix, so encumbered and dragged down by his sensual nature, is yet (it grows more manifest with each revolving cycle of time) the child of God. Christ's clue brings the whole human race into its true light. He himself showed as a veritable Son of God, gleaming with the light of the unseen, making His Father in a manner visible to us, bringing us by faith into living contact with Him. But in His light we see light. His human form is to us the pledge. Everything in a human form, with the character and impress of a man, is a child of

[1] "There is a material world . . . there is a far vaster spiritual world. This world is but a little hidden sorrow upon the face of that shining deep," says my friend Harold Shepheard, in his book *In Jacob Behmen's School*, p. 12.

God, can become conscious of it, and be changed by that consciousness into real sonship. A world of human beings, however varied in colour and type, however low in the scale of intelligence, however superstitious and morally corrupt, yet intrinsically and potentially children of God—that is the vision which opens to Faith. And God, infinite in power and love, pursues His creatures to win them. The more lost, the more perverse they seem, the more persistent and untiring is His pursuit. For it is humanity as a whole that is the lost sheep in the wilderness of the universe; and the Good Shepherd is seeking it, and will seek until He finds it. How wonderful and rich in meaning is the universe thus shown to Faith, the scene of such a drama, with the promise of such an achievement!

CHAPTER XI

PSYCHOLOGY AND FAITH

The New Psychology, as it is called, is not favourable, at present, to religion, because it happens that the man who has been its protagonist, we might even say its discoverer, is one to whom religion is meaningless. The Freudian Psychology has little difficulty in explaining religion away, dispersing it as a morning cloud. The event must show which wins, the Freudian Psychology or Religion.

But for the moment Psychology is one of the forces which war against Faith. And as everything "new" has the power of arresting attention and absorbing interest, this Psychology is now in the limelight. Its conclusions are all revelations; revelation, not harmonizing with its conclusions, is delusion.

Psychology takes the place which Theology occupied for former generations. Psychology is the study of the mind, its constituent elements, its operations, its values. Whatever is not in the mind is excluded from consideration. The external facts, the objective universe, do not concern the psychologist. And as God, according to this new science, is not in the mind, He, together with the universe, may be dis-

regarded. All we care about is the mind, its works, its developments, its retention of its past, its actual state ; its future need not occupy us.

But whatever may be said by the psychological school now in the ascendant, a searching analysis of the human mind does and must discover religion. The Master Faculty insists on recognition, even if it defies explanation. Granted that it is not found in Freud, or even in a majority of psychological specialists, it is found in the human mind as such. The idea of God, even the most bitter opponent of God must admit, is in the human mind and will not be expelled. The faculty that seeks for God, and finds God, is there in every normal man. And if it be maintained that it is not the business of Psychology as now understood to follow up the knowledge of God, which is suggested by the faculty for Him, that only tends to show that Psychology is not enough. Theology is the more necessary.

But the dogmas of the New Psychology are already disputed, as in the last generation the dogmas of materialism were disputed. And there are now many writers, following Mr. Pym, who find the New Psychology an aid to religion, an explanation of religious phenomena, which does not explain them away or resolve them into irreligion, but establishes their validity.

Dean Inge, in his *Faith and its Psychology*, was beforehand with the claim that Faith is a psychological fact, however psychologists may agree to ignore it. 'Faith would seem to be only the human side of

Divine grace immanent in the human mind"; that is a conclusion drawn from the scholastic theology of Thomas Aquinas. "Faith is something deeper, more universal, more fundamental than anything that can be assigned to the independent activities of the intellect, will or feelings. Behind all these determinations lies the deep-seated religious instinct or impulse." "Faith is a basal energy of the whole man." [1]

That this Master Faculty remains dormant and neglected by a vast number of human beings is no more proof of its unreality, than the neglect of art or of reason by an equal proportion of people can be urged against the reality of the artistic or the rational faculty.

"It is plain," says Dean Inge "that Faith requires certain personal qualities. If we are too stupid to ask for any meaning in our experience, too self-absorbed to be interested in anything that does not concern our petty affairs, too frivolous to care seriously for what can only be cared for seriously, too gloomy to hope, or too wilful to learn, we are labouring under fatal disqualifications for the experience of Faith. This is the meaning of the words of Christ, 'If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine,' and 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'" [2]

When Psychology wearies of its absorption in abnormal mental states, a prepossession which is justified by the therapeutic purpose of much psycho-

[1] Op. cit., pp. 33, 42, 53. [2] Op. cit., p. 52.

logical investigation, and when it can escape being ridden to death by some theory which makes the investigator see red (such as Freud's reduction of all mental phenomena to the sex instinct, repressed or sublimated) it will probably recognize as its greatest discovery what St. Augustine discovered by his own spiritual experience : " Thou hast made me for Thyself, and my heart is restless until it finds rest in Thee." That is a fact in the human mind, which unprejudiced study is bound to discover. There is in the mind's very constitution a sense of incompleteness. It seeks its tally. There is an unappeasable hunger. Its thoughts find no conclusion, no rest, unless the conclusion is that of Ecclesiastes, or of Amiel, " Vanity of vanities ; all is vanity." Its activities leave it exhausted, but never satisfied. When it has accomplished most, it is only conscious of the insignificance of the achievement. It has strong and varied emotions, loves and hates, aspirations and the bitterness of failure, a passion for men, or a passion against them ; but it reaches no calm, no haven, no satisfying equilibrium. But always, underlying every experience and every achievement is the great hunger for God. Only when Faith brings God within reach, and brings the human spirit into connection and harmony with that transcendent Being, does peace come, and the goal is reached.

Here is a fact which is not of yesterday, like psycho-analysis, but is as old as the records of human experience, manifest in all the religions, in all the philosophies that man has devised, as clear

in Plato as in the Psalms, in the Upanishads as in the Epistles of St. Paul.

The faculty which alone brings rest to the mind and a sense of fulfilment must be taken into account in any inclusive examination of the mind. And Psychology is failing in its own acknowledged sphere, if it ignores that Master Faculty. And, though Psychology may refrain from following up the suggestion of that faculty, reason itself will affirm that the God whom the mind of man needs and finds is a reality and not a dream.

This faculty of Faith must be recognized, the realities to which it leads must be real. "As pants the hart after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God" is a psychological fact, not in everyone, but in every age and in every land. And the rest in the Lord which quenches that thirst is an unfailing experience of human nature, not in every one, perhaps even in but a few; but a fact it is, so significant, so infinitely valuable to human life and progress, that a Psychology which can find no room for it, or take no interest in it, must in the long run be a science in which man will take no interest, and for which he will not ultimately make room.

No sound Psychology can ignore the facts which are covered by the term Mysticism. The mystics are, it may be admitted, a race apart, but the mystical experience is not confined to them; just as poets, genuine and acknowledged poets, are a race apart, and yet touches of poetry are found in many, perhaps most, human beings. The mystic, like Jacob Behmen,

or his pupil William Law, cultivates by all means in his power a direct communion with the spiritual world, and has frequent times, of ecstasy or revelation, in which the things of the spirit become intensely real, and God is nearer and more vivid than any created thing or person. But all of us have moments, less intense, perhaps, less rapturous, in which spiritual realities predominate over the material, and God, possibly in the person of Christ, seems in touch with us, or through the Spirit seems moving in us. These mystical experiences must be included in any true Psychology, just as much as the poetic, or artistic, faculty. It is impossible to deny them, or to brush them aside. Of what value is any explanation of the human mind, which rules out of account the experiences of the Psalmists or the prophets, the δαιμόνιον of Socrates, or the inner light of George Fox? Nay, we may ask whether any Psychology can be completely trusted which does not frankly allow for the mind of Christ, that intimate knowledge of God which enabled Jesus to say that no one knew the Father but the Son, and He to whom the Son willed to reveal Him, or, with equal simplicity, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," and "I and my Father are one."

People who have stifled the religious aspirations of their own nature, and despise the so-called religious aspirations of others, may be content with a Psychology which rules religion out. But whoever takes a broad view of human nature and of history, and therefore sees how religion always emerges wherever men are,

and develops with human experience and progress, will ask as the first condition of a true Psychology that it should give the due place to religion, and will probably feel that the Psychology of religion is the most important fact in the examination of the human mind.

And when with this thought in mind the New Psychology is interrogated, it is found to yield certain considerable aids to faith. It cannot yet be said to be an unequivocal auxiliary to religion; but it sheds a good deal of very welcome light on the processes which induce faith; it shows with considerable clearness why certain people have not faith, and makes the inquiry how they might find and use the Master Faculty within more promising.

For example this Psychology has opened up the whole question of the sublimation of instincts and appetites, which in the language of religion is conversion, and in the language of Christ is the New Birth. A very welcome light breaks upon the whole spiritual drama, when we recognize that tendencies in the soul which we call evil may be so directed as to become good. The best and noblest character results from the sublimation of primitive passions. And as the main hindrance to Faith is the uncontrolled instincts and appetites, physical and mental, the idea of changing them in direction, which can be done sometimes by the will, and often by suggestion or auto-suggestion, becomes a practical aid to Faith.

For instance, the sex instinct, uncontrolled or misdirected, is the cause of a large proportion of the

ills of human life. The army of fallen women in every "Christian" country; the horrible outrages which, unfortunately, are reported in the daily papers; the foul disease which is the scourge of our whole community; the miserable marriages and sordid details of the divorce courts, are all the result of the primitive sex instinct, working uncontrolled by principle and foolishly misdirected. In itself it is wholly good, a thought of God, designed to continue the race, and to fill human life with joy and peace and efficiency. Perverted, it deadens all the spiritual faculties, and makes Faith impossible. The boundless irreligion and spiritual deadness of our time are due principally to this perversion of the sex instinct, which, especially since the war, has attained portentous proportions. But it may be a great aid to reform, and to the recovery of the spiritual sense, if psychologists can show the world how this powerful instinct can be rightly directed. If the instinct works on the lines of pure love, and wholesome marriage, and if it is always restrained and inspired by the thought that the purpose is the production of human life, and the service of the whole race, it is wholly and absolutely good. And most of the assured happiness and peace, most of the progress and inspiration of mankind, can be traced to this divine gift.

But the sublimation may take another form. Where the natural development of the instinct is, from one cause or another, out of the question, it may run into channels of philanthropy and service to men. The force which might have become a pollution and a

misery, sublimated, may be a powerful influence of purity and blessing.

The acquisitiveness, which undirected may harden the heart producing callousness and cruelty, and that most repulsive of human characters, the miser, may be sublimated into the steady effort to acquire spiritual riches. The passion of St. Francis of Assisi, or of St. Francis of Ancoats, the passion of St. Catherine of Genoa, or of Mary Slessor, might have been the sublimation of an appetite which misdirected would have ended in the character of Scrooge. Dickens showed with great psychological insight the sublimation of the miser's tendency.

The violent temper which misdirected becomes a desolating volcano of the hearth, overwhelming the home with fiery lava or deadening ashes, may be sublimated into the energy which carries through great enterprises, and lifts the world in its upward climb.

It is not too much to say that when a sublimation of this kind has been achieved, immediately the suppressed faculty of Faith springs into life. Indeed, no man can experience the transformation of a bad passion into a good one, or the direction of a doubtful instinct to a noble achievement, without a realization of God. Faith liberated lays hold of Him.

But there is another way in which Psychology has been shedding new lights on the religious life, and so prompting to religious effort. The study of suggestion has explained many of the ways in which the spiritual

life is initiated. But the discovery of auto-suggestion has made prayer a more tangible and appreciable reality than it has ever been. Prayer is often very difficult when the mind is directed to God as the infinite Being that fills time and space. The tongue falters, the heart misgives, when one wonders how can the ear of God receive my prayer, how can the attention of God turn to me, among the countless millions of His creatures, among the countless millions of His worlds, how can I expect an answer to my request, when the mighty order of the universe has to be maintained by the omnipotence of God? But prayer becomes at once more real and more practical, when the discovery of the unconscious self is made, and we realize that auto-suggestion may reach and move that unconscious self which is not subject to the direct control of the will or the reason. That life within which goes on, without consciousness, all the processes of the bodily functions, all the springs of thought and feeling, which we do not deliberately, or even consciously, initiate, may be, nay must be, in contact with the *anima mundi*, the Power not ourselves. We pick up that larger other life than ours at a certain point where consciousness begins, and drop it where consciousness fades into sleep; but it is there, going on all the time. Consciousness floats upon an unplumbed sea of being, emerges or is submerged, but is sustained and carried on by that supporting and circumambient Power, which we have agreed to call God.

That this is so cannot be disputed. But if this is

so, God is very near us, even within us, and prayer is communing with the Power which "is not so far off as even to be near." Prayer is the act by which we try to connect our consciousness with Him, who is ever working in us to will and to do. It is the surrender, the trust in Him, by which we co-operate with him, and carry out His will.

The auto-suggestion of health has received perhaps sufficient attention. But that is only a special instance of a far more general principle. M. Baudouin tells us that the repetition of a formula, suggesting health, directs the forces of the body, through the subconscious, to the ailing spot, to the diseased member, and heals. But what is the auto-suggestion of prayer? It is, that the life of God may flow unimpeded through my whole being; that the holy character of Jesus may be formed within me; that the indwelling of God may mould, control and use me. And because that subconscious life is and must be in contact with all life, all persons, all worlds, the suggestion may go far beyond myself, my internal state or my external actions; it can go into the whole earth, nay into all worlds, and labour that the name of the Father in Heaven may be hallowed, and that His kingdom may come, and His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

This is a psychological act; it requires time; hurried prayers and ejaculations may be of use where the habits of prayer are settled; but the main thing is to form those habits; to let the auto-suggestion be regular and constant, by which the life of God is

lived in us, and we become the ready instruments of His will.

And we may add that the discovery of psycho-analysis, if it is understood and guarded against its possible abuses, may come as a great aid to those whose work it is to give spiritual direction to others. It is recognized that many morbid mental conditions can be cured by unravelling them, and tracing out the long-forgotten events, or repressions, or shocks, which gave rise to them. But in that most delicate task, which is called the cure of souls, it may often be possible for a skilled spiritual director to lay bare the cause (hidden far away) of spiritual trouble. "Who can minister to a mind diseased?" was a question of despair. But within certain limits this new discovery will enable a faithful and unselfish physician of the soul to exercise such a ministry. Of course it has always been done to some extent by every true shepherd of a spiritual flock.

There is a delightful story in the life of Robertson of Irvine, who by instinct anticipated the discoveries of Psychology. A parishioner was ill in bed, and his mind was greatly troubled because he had risen in the night and prayed with his head covered. Robertson was far too wise to brush aside the scruple of the sick man with the assurance that it did not signify. "Ah," he said with all gravity, "but perhaps your feet were bare?" "Yes," said the poor sufferer, "they were." "Well," said Robertson, "there are two ways by which men have shown their reverence in prayer; one by uncovering the head; the other,

as in the case of Moses at the bush, by taking off the shoes. I think it will be quite right, if you had not your shoes on."

The comfort and assurance were complete.

That was psycho-analysis. And a great possibility is opened out, that by entering sympathetically into the minds of those who are troubled, we may get at complexes and disentangle them, and so make psychology a help to spiritual ministrations.

But we are only at the beginning of the study of the human mind. The mind which studies everything at last begins to study itself. The great Positivist, August Comte, less than a century ago denied that there ever could be a science of psychology. And notwithstanding the enormous output of works on psychology to-day, we must not be too sure that he was wrong. This study of the mind does not as yet yield any assured and agreed results. Each psychologist is partial; he is influenced very naturally by his own mind which is his nearest subject of examination. He is apt to think that all minds are like his, and to impute to them his own defects and limitations. Or even if by examining other minds and by *questionnaires*, he collects materials of great interest, he has only shown what is true of some minds, a very small proportion of the total. His generalizations may be premature.

Thus the conclusions of the psychologists referred to at the beginning of this chapter, leaving religion out of the account, are obviously premature and one-sided. And the steady succession of books on the

Psychology of Religion is showing that neither Freud nor Jung can be accepted as final.

Thus Dr. W. S. Bruce, in *The Psychology of Christian Life and Behaviour*, says [1] at the end of his chapter on "The Immediacy of Faith" these pregnant words: "A correct view of the human consciousness vindicates the immediacy of our communion with God. In our religion we are in touch with reality. We have the sense of a growing oneness with the spirit of goodness and truth. We have made acquaintance with the real." Then he quotes from Coe's *Psychology of Religion*: "Religion survives religious doctrines because the adventure of life is large, and because in its very largeness as adventure it is an original acquaintance with the real."

And so Principal Selbie, in his *The Psychology of Religion*, says: "As we have often noted, the fact that psychology is bound to take into account is the assurance which religious experience gives to men and women that God is, and that He is in real contact and communion with them." [2]

The dogmatism of irreligious men is incredible. Their power of closing their eyes directly any religious facts are presented to them, like Nelson putting the telescope to his blind eye and declaring that he could not see the signal of recall, and of quietly ignoring that significant and ever present aspect of our human life, should be always realized and allowed for. Thus Mr. A. G. Tansley, in *The New Psychology*, says complacently: "The new psychology obtains its

[1] P. 206. [2] P. 298.

material from the whole field of mental life, normal and abnormal, from external observation and from introspection, from the study of behaviour and conduct, from art, literature and practical life, from mythology and history, from the habits and customs of primitive peoples, and from those of the most advanced civilizations," in short, from every conceivable quarter except from religion and religious experiences. "Already great strides have been made towards a self-consistent and illuminating interpretation of the human mind, and the field of future investigation seems illimitable."

But there never can be a consistent and illuminating interpretation of the human mind which does not fairly and fully recognize these facts of the human mind: that man is ever seeking for God: that men are always finding God: that the faculty by which they find Him is part of the very constitution of the mind; and that the God whom they find by this faculty is not only real, but the only cause of reality. There may be, and there are, many imperfect conceptions of God, many false and inadequate theologies: there may be, and there are, many superstitions and fanaticisms arising out of the search for God, and mistaken notions of what God is and what He demands. There is some excuse for the scientific observer who loses patience with this variety and extravagance, often lapsing into absurdity, and rudely treats religious beliefs as mythology, and religious experiences as hallucinations. But these vagaries and absurdities are no excuse to a philosopher for not finding and

acknowledging the deep, basic and unchangeable realities of religion.

This fact should be accepted as fundamental, that man as man feels after God ; and if there is no God, if that idea is like the sunken island in the North Sea, to which the lemmings from the Norwegian coast year by year swim out, to perish in their illusion ; if, in a word, the most persistent instinct of the human mind, the instinct which bids us to find Reality in the Being greater than ourselves, precedent to ourselves, the Eternal, is all chimera and delusion ; the investigation of the human mind becomes abortive, as the object of human life is unintelligible.

Psychologists, like other men, should recognize that whether it is logically demonstrated or demonstrable, or whether it transcends our reason and understanding : God is the one sure and irrefutable fact, and Faith is the faculty by which we find Him. To discuss a universe without God is only to wander in a wilderness, and to " find no end in wandering mazes lost " ; and to discuss the human mind without the faculty of Faith, is to wade into a quagmire from which it is difficult to escape. The godless Psychology presents the human personality as a Serbonian bog, a Cimmerian darkness, a revolting haunt of satyrs, where we touch but tombs.[1]

Those devoid of this supreme faculty are abnormal,

[1] " The New Psychology," said the Rev. J. C. Hardwick at the Oxford Conference of Modern Churchmen in August 1925, " has few generous illusions about human nature. It could dot St. Augustine's *i*'s, cross his *t*'s. It regards human nature as having its roots, not merely in the soil, but in the dunghill. *La nostalgie de la boue* is its ruling passion."

and in their stunted mentality are ill fitted to explore and to explain the human mind.

Those who have not faith are not safe guides in a universe where the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent is life eternal.

Where there is no vision the people perish. Shut up to the wisdom and knowledge of those who know not God, a generation stumbles and sinks; the darkness deepens, the confusion grows, with each accession of knowledge; the whole universe is the outcome of unintelligence, while we drop the plummet down the deep broad universe and say, "No God." But the blind prophets never endure for long. The light breaks. God utters His voice through men and women who have the vision. Never leaving Himself even in the darkest times without a witness, presently He brings in a new spiritual age:

> Through silence and the trembling stars
> Comes faith, from tracts no foot has trod.

CHAPTER XII

THE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP

In looking back over the seventy years of my life, I find the one unmistakable and persistent factor in it has been the presence of God. There have been no miracles in my life; only it has itself been a miracle. I have had few extraordinary experiences; but the experience as a whole has been such as fills me with wonder. I cherish the belief that most people have had my experience, or something like it. I am almost sure that everyone might have it, and was even meant to have it.

My conception of God has changed progressively, but *He* has not changed. If my knowledge of Him has grown, I am still aware that it is elementary, and I realize that in this life, with our present faculties, it can never be more than a beginning, though it may be a promise of endless progress.

To mark the stages in the enlarging conception, and the steps in the knowledge of God, is a fascinating study. God is great and I know Him not, and yet into His greatness my littleness has been ever pressing.

In childhood I was conscious of what Rudolf Otto has called the Numinous, the vast intangible reality

which fills us with awe, and yet exercises over us an irresistible attraction. Wordsworth's description of his experience when he pulled out into the lake, and saw the high peak rise over the nearer hills, and then awestruck returned to the shore, walking away with a sense of "unknown modes of Being," is true to what I felt as a child when I was first taken to Wales, and passed under real mountains. They awed me with a pleasing terror, and at night I cried with the emotion they had caused. Years afterwards in the valley of Chamounix, the vast snow-bulk of Mont Blanc produced the same effect.

This was God impressing Himself on a child's mind by His handiwork. But before long God was more personal in the aroused conscience, when the sense of guilt came, and the wish for pardon. My sin oppressed me, all the more because no one punished me. For childish peccadilloes which did not matter I received childish punishments. But for sin, for what I knew in my heart was sin, there seemed no immediate penalty. And I felt that God saw me. I trembled. I asked to be forgiven. From earliest days I seemed to be always falling, and yet always forgiven, and lifted up, and carried forward. God was near as holiness, but as love. Years passed before I could put it into words; but God as Holy Love was an experience from the first.

In those first days I had an instinct to pray, and thought that God could do anything I asked Him. Once I tested God in my childish way. I put a farthing into a drawer, and knelt down fervently

asking God to change it into a half-sovereign. I opened the drawer to find the farthing unchanged. It was my first lesson in the limitation of answers to prayer. But all the time prayers, my prayers, were being answered, though as yet I had not learnt what prayer was, or how to maintain it.

Looking back on the education that was given me, I cannot doubt but that a Divine thought was worked out in it, because it was consistent, and went on in quite unexpected ways from stage to stage. When a telegram came to say that I was elected to an open scholarship at New College, Oxford, I felt God had done it, and fell on my knees asking all in the house to join me in thanksgiving. And when at the end of my course I was elected to a fellowship in my college, there came an awestruck sense that God in this way was calling me to do something for Him.

I recognize the ways in which He made Himself clearer to me in the course of my training. Once when I had read Pearson on the Creed I told my father how inconclusive the arguments for God seemed to me. He at once said: "Yes, all arguments for God are inconclusive, because they are unnecessary; we know God without argument." That remark opened my eyes, and helped me through all the mental struggles of college days. For I happened to be in a generation dominated by Mill and Spencer, and Huxley and Tyndale, a period of dominant scepticism and materialism. If I had thought that God was proved by argument I might easily have been overthrown by the wits and the authorities of the university.

But God was there all the time; the motto of my university did more for me than the university itself: *Dominus illuminatio mea* is inscribed all over Oxford.

Then, when I discovered Plato, I received an immense reinforcement. Here was the richest and noblest mind, and the most fascinating style, in an age four hundred years before Christ, showing that he knew God, and set Him over against the impious mythologies of his day, identifying God with the supreme Idea, the *idea idearum*, the Idea of Good. There I read the anticipation of Christ, that if a just man should appear in the world, he would be crucified. There, in the *Gorgias* and in the *Republic*, I read the vision of judgment, the destiny of the good and of the bad. Plato was in a sense my schoolmaster to bring me to Christ. Then I came to know Kant. Not so fascinating, but equally convincing, here was the greatest of modern philosophers rescuing thought from the scepticism of Hume, showing that while the arguments for God, cosmic, teleologic, ontological, are inconclusive, the reality of God is one of the necessary regulative ideas of all our knowledge; and then showing in the *Metaphysic of Ethics* how in our moral nature, and the categorical imperative, is the authentic voice of God uttering itself in every human being.

Thus, little by little, God became not only a truth of experience, but a truth of reason. He gave me Plato and Kant. He led me through that treacherous sea of blatant agnosticism, and cynical denial, and formal meaningless religion.

When I left Oxford I had become very sure of His

leading, and I was not afraid "to follow where airy voices lead."

But His presence was made manifest in the friends who were given to me. One friend was brought into my life who for forty years was to me what Beatrice was to Dante. She brought me to the faith in Christ; she kept my eyes steadily turned to spiritual things. With a rich and rare human culture, with a glowing imagination and yet a remarkable logical sense, she was, in many difficult places of the way, the guide and guardian of my soul, the living, speaking, loving messenger of God to me.

Another dear friend and relative kept me in touch with vital religion, and brought me into that tide of spiritual power which swept the country in Moody's first visit. Always on the inner side of my life I was in contact with those to whom God was as real as He was to me and, in the times of my doubt and struggle, more real. Where intellectual agreement was impossible, spiritual experience was identical. I found God was above our views and theories and creeds, much more real than any of them, holding us in a unity of His Spirit, when our minds diverged, and seemed far removed from one another.

In my call to the ministry God made Himself overwhelmingly plain to me. It required me to make a very difficult decision, and to enter on a course which seemed very doubtful. But in retrospect I cannot doubt that He led me. He chose my career, He appointed my place, He gathered around me the friends and supporters who made my work possible.

One singular coincidence illustrates the way in which he leads us. The year of my opening ministry, 1880, was the year of Hatch's Bampton Lecture on the *Organization of the Early Christian Church.* It was a trenchant attack on the ecclesiastical view at that time dominant in Oxford. It showed convincingly that the early Church was congregational. Hort's book, *The Christian Ecclesia,* in a detailed examination vindicated Hatch's position. Entering myself the Congregational ministry I wrote to thank Hatch for his book: he fully confirmed my understanding of his view. The Church in its earliest and purest form was Congregational. This led to a very happy friendship with that great scholar whom his own university hardly appreciated.

Here again I was conscious of God approving of my entering into the Congregational ministry. And in all the subsequent years I have had to thank Him for this direction. He has led me little by little to appreciate and value the Church in the largest sense of the word, and to see the good in all (or almost all) the forms which its organization has taken. The Roman and the Greek and the Anglican, the Lutheran, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, all seem to me now " parts of His ways," and I think I can worship with them all, and recognize the one Lord; but only in a Congregational Church could I feel at home, and at liberty. It is that conception of a Church, which my father presented in his book published just as I was born, *The True Theory of a Church,* the congregation of believing people, who meeting in Christ's

name, believe in His presence, acknowledge His sole authority, and receive their orders through His Spirit; the conception, as it seems to me, of the apostles and of the Churches they founded, that has offered to me the opportunity of fulfilling my vocation, and of being all my life a minister of Christ.

In this ministry, through successes and failures, through struggles and doubts, and readjustments and enlargements of view, and even changes of the point of view, as knowledge has advanced and truth has stretched its horizon, in smiles of encouragement, in frowns of disapproval, in love and wrath, up to this present moment, God has never allowed me for long together to question His direct interest in the work, His acceptance of it as His work, His acknowledgment of me as a servant though so unprofitable a servant.

Were I to attempt a record of all the ways in which God has manifested Himself during this ministry which He has enabled me to maintain for nearly half a century, this chapter would overflow and fill the book. But it is possible to mention the manifestations along one line. This half-century, the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth, has been a time of change succeeding change, rapid growth of knowledge, discoveries in the physical world, revolutions in the mental world. New religions and spiritual movements have been constantly emerging. Assaults on religion have resulted in the disintegration of religious systems and formal creeds; and contending theories, and supposed revelations, have made tranquillity and assurance impossible. I look back on shock after

shock, on new thought and new claims constantly breaking in like a flood, and God always serene above the tumult, stilling the rage of the flood and of the waterspouts with His word of Peace.

Professor Seeley's *Natural Religion* was a shattering blow in the early days of my ministry. It seemed to discredit all revealed religion ; the system of beliefs and doctrines in which I had been brought up, dissolved and floated down the spate of modern thought. Nothing saved me then but God Himself, bringing to me afresh, over against Natural Religion, His Supernatural Religion.

Then came the change in the approach to the Bible. Robertson Smith's article in the Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica,* and then Dr. Abbot's article on the Gospels, showed the intelligent public that the doctrine of Biblical Infallibility, on which Protestantism *seemed* to rest, and for a vast multitude of the untrained actually did rest, could not be maintained in the light of historic and critical inquiries. It was necessary to find a new and surer basis of teaching and preaching. When I began the inquiry I was aware of the danger, the danger which has overtaken many critics and modernists, of losing the Christian faith altogether. It was God Himself, speaking to me in countless ways, that brought me through, with an altered view of the Bible, but a far stronger faith in Christ. And the ways by which He brought me were these : First, through most unpremeditated and unexpected means He turned my whole attention to the mission field, and forced me to note

that coming of the Kingdom in the world at large, which is often much more marked in seasons when in the Church at home there is perplexity and apparent loss of power. He showed me in that world movement the answer to the doubts and fears. And at last, in 1910, I was permitted to take part in the world Conference at Edinburgh which opened up the new and conquering era of missions. The other way in which He led me was, that, chiefly through the writings of Dr. Alexander Whyte and his introduction to Law, Bishop Andrewes, and the other masters of prayer, I discovered that open secret of habitual and ordered communion with God. Here was the rock and the stronghold. When all accepted authorities were questioned, and all established creeds were dissolving, I found that it was possible to keep in touch with God day by day, and that here was the certainty of things hoped for and the assurance of things unseen, which enabled one to be calm and to go on, though the earth should be shaken and the mountains should sink in the sea. He drew me to Himself in prayer. Personal communion with Him became the surest, and often the only sure, thing in life.

One more instance may be given. In 1910 my house and life seemed to collapse in ruins. The constant help of my guide, philosopher and friend was first shattered by illness and disaster, and then removed by death. For two years I walked in shadow, and the hope of ever being able to do my work well again was clouded. I had to learn to live and work when joy had fled.

His presence was never removed even in the valley of the shadow of death. In due time He showed Himself again in light and joy. He rebuilt for me the house of life, renewing my youth, and brightening my hope. Now for eight years He has manifested Himself in human love, and a constant incentive to go on with the work which He gave me to do.

In all the experiences of the years the certitude of God has grown, as the knowledge of Him has expanded. The stages of the knowledge of God are repeated in each human experience. That gives a special interest to the Bible, which is a record of the growing knowledge, as it was made possible by the enlarged understanding of people and prophets. What a crude and limited idea of God Israel had in the time of the Judges! David still thought that beyond the borders of Yahwe's land he would be outside the possibility of worshipping Him. When Deuteronomy was written the idea still prevailed that only one place could be the legitimate altar of sacrifice. Even Micah, the contemporary of Isaiah, spoke as if the other nations could have their gods, just as Israel had Yahwe. The exile had to come, and Ezekiel and the Unknown Prophet had to worship in a strange land before religion could rise to the idea of a God who has no local limitations, the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, who takes up the isles as a very little thing.

This growth of the idea of God, stage by stage, is discernible in the development of the individual. And I can trace in my own experience the widening

of the thought. God is ever the same; but His reflection in our minds depends much on the reflector. As the mind grows and matures, the face of God alters, the conception of God pulses out in ever widening circles, which reach no limit. The finite receives the image of the Infinite.

By far the most important step in this enlarging conception came when I began to realize that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is on the face of Christ Jesus. To see God in Christ—to know the meaning of those two sayings: "I and the Father are one," and "my Father is greater than I"; to judge the unseen God by His Son whom we have seen; to interpret the Infinite Being by the person who was the exact image of Him within the limits of a human personality and a human activity; to come at God only through Christ, so that other and cruder thoughts of God could be corrected, and laid aside; this was the most decisive step I took in the knowledge of God. From the time that I began to grasp this, so many years ago, God became personal to me, He became love and pity and pardon to me, fearful in holiness, but at the same time the inviting voice: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The next very decisive step in the knowledge of God came with deliverance from the traditional Bibliolatry. So long as Calvin's theology prevailed, and I thought that all the early and crude conceptions of God in the Old Testament had to be accepted as God's revelation of Himself to us, I could not harmonize the God of

the New Testament with the jealous and wrathful deity who punished a king because he did not exterminate his enemies, and killed an incautious man who steadied the ark when the oxen stumbled. But with the revelation of scholarship and criticism, with the application of the historic sense, and the moral sense, and one might add common sense, to the Biblical literature, came the great relief. It was the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that was authentic God; and all conceptions of Him that did not agree with Christ were only the feeling after, the search for, the attempts to delineate, the one Eternal Father.

Until Calvinism and Catholicism alike give place to Christ, our idea of God remains crude and inconsistent.

In that little record of Dr. Lindsay by Isabel Cameron, the elder visits David Macintyre, broken-hearted for the loss of his boy. He begins, what evidence had the parents that the child was one of the elect? He explained: "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate; whom He did predestinate He also called." "Read your Bible, David Macintyre, and don't take it upon yourself to say you'll see your child again." "The wife there fainted," said David drily in telling the story to Dr. Lindsay, "and I put the elder out o' the door, and I said——" he paused, his throat working convulsively, "Aye, aye," said the Doctor, musing aloud and affecting not to see David's emotion. "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those with which I was wounded in the*

house of my friends. You surely don't believe that the Heavenly Father would do what no earthly father would do." "It's this doctrine of election," David groaned. "If wee Davy is no one of the elect, then I'm no seeking to gang to heaven. I wadna be nane contentit."

"Oh hush, hush, man," his wife said in a fright.

"An' I'll no hush, then," he stormed. "For sax years I've been like a man in prison, ma heid tellin' me ae thing and ma hert the tither. O sir, tell me the richts of it," and the minister told him. But the elder regarded him as a reprobate. To this pass bibliolatry has brought Protestantism, a pass as strait and impossible as Romanism itself.

If all the views and suggestions of God in the Bible are to be accepted without question, as the Word of God, the letter kills. But when we see that it is not God in the Bible, but God in the face of Christ Jesus, whom we seek and find, the confusion clears, the light shines.

There came for me another extension of the knowledge of God, when I found the meaning of Art. Puritanism did not recognize that God is Truth, Goodness and Beauty. Even though what they thought the Infallible Word, said "How great is Thy beauty," even though the term "the beauty of holiness" was accepted in a metaphorical sense, the pursuit of Beauty was suspect. Art must be kept outside the sanctuary, outside even the sanctuary of the heart. But through the influence of my mentor, and then through visiting Italy, and finally in the

philosophy of Eucken, I began to recognize that God, my God, was showing me Himself in all beauty.

> For a moment I could guess Thee
> From Thy creatures who confess Thee,
> When the morn and evening bless Thee
> And Thy smile is on the sea.

I remember two ecstatic moments, one when I first saw the jewelled façade of the Duomo at Pisa, one when I looked up at he mosaics of the Twelve Apostles in the vault of the Baptistery at Ravenna—there have been many such moments, but these two are vivid in memory—when my whole soul was invaded by the tide of beauty, and I knew that it was God. Ugliness was the denial, or at least the privation, of God. But beauty after which true Art is always striving is one aspect of the Trinity—the Good, the True, the Beautiful, which is God.

And later, science widened the conception and began to reveal God in unexpected ways. Sir Arthur Thomson's *Outline of Science* has been a great appendix to my Scriptures. What the Bible says in brief is by the conquests of science ever expanding. Creation widens on the view. The opening chapter of Genesis, so marvellous an epitome for the sixth century B.C. before science was born, opens out in this outline of science, and will be filled in when science has advanced farther. The earth itself is a miracle and crammed with miracles of life; the sea is thronged with life unseen of men; man himself is a miracle from those early approaches to man in the

Neanderthal or the Piltdown skulls, up to the great creative geniuses of our race. And the heavens begin to declare the glory of God with a new chorus, when each twinkling star expands into a solar system often vastly greater than our own ; when Betelgeuse, that right shoulder of Orion, is so vast in its circumference, that our whole system, including distant and invisible Uranus, could revolve within it !

What Lucretius called the *flammantia mœnia mundi* widen into a space so vast that light takes fifty thousand years to travel from one point to another in the vault of heaven which our eyes see by night.

And the Maker of all this—the intelligence that conceives and controls all this, the inconceivable power which maintains all this, the beauty which gives to our minute view the spangled heavens, and to all those systems order, light, motion, fire, purpose —this is God, the Being who gives to my tiny spark of being existence and consciousness ; the Being who wins my love by loving me, and enlarges His love and mine in the slow unveiling of His Infinitude. As knowledge grows one is increasingly "lost in wonder, love and awe." Any thought of defining God must be abandoned. We can only describe Him in the sense of surveying His works and His ways. But we are sure of Him in this amazing and conclusive way, that the faculty of Faith admits us to a personal contact with Him, a sense of His presence, and of His response to our need. This is the one certainty about God, our relation with Him.

I know that no language of mine can attempt to describe Him, or to say what He is; even imagination is powerless to soar to the heights or to search the depths of His fathomless and unimaginable being; I recognize that my best attempts to represent Him may be only idols which advancing knowledge will cast aside, and the rending veil will reveal in their pitiable and puerile inadequacy. But I know that this God, this holy indescribable author of my being and all being, is not only a Regulative Idea, which I must assume in order to give coherence and intelligibility to the universe, but also my Father, a Friend nearer and more accessible than any other. I know that when I enter my chamber and close the door, I can commune with Him, can receive His communications, can be guided by His will and comforted by His love. I know in looking back over my brief span of life, that He has cared for me, planned for me, marked out my course, blessed me whenever I have understood His purpose and worked to achieve it; and in the countless instances, in which through ignorance, and perversity, and wilfulness, or through the triumph of passion over reason, I have missed His purpose, and transgressed His laws, He has shown Himself to my repentant heart all mercy and forgiveness, presenting to me His Son as the propitiation for my sins, as for the sins of the whole world, and assuring me, in spite of my insignificance, and the shame of my unworthiness, that He, even He, will never leave me or forsake me, but in life and death, and in the vast forever, will be my God.

O

CHAPTER XIII

THE MASTER FACULTY AND THE OTHERS

THE danger that besets the use of the Master Faculty is that we are apt to rely on it, to the exclusion of the other faculties, the reason, the will, the imagination, the æsthetic or artistic side of our nature. Into this kind of mistake many religious people have fallen, or fall, and the result is a one-sided development which discredits religion, or even a fanaticism which ruins it.

Dean Inge, after his close inquiry into the psychology of faith, concludes by saying: "We have found that it is a divine endowment of human nature, which operates through our natural faculties." It operates through, and by no means suspends, our natural faculties.

The mystic, knowing that he gets at something which reason does not give him, an immediate communion with God, may easily neglect and depreciate the reason. Even William Law, when he came under the influence of Behmen, ran into that excess, though happily the *Serious Call*, with its sanity and common sense, was always at the back of his spiritual life, and saved him personally from the disaster which over-

takes less disciplined souls when reason is despised. But reason is as truly a divine endowment of human nature as faith is ; and a faith which scorns or neglects it may betray us. Because we are fed on super-substantial food, we may not forgo the bread which nourishes the body. Reason has its place and function in all the approaches to faith, in the exercise of faith, in the results of faith. It can never do what faith does ; it cannot lift us out of the earthly and material condition into that spiritual world, to which intrinsically we belong ; but it can prevent those transcendent experiences from dwarfing and destroying the life which we, as part of an order of nature, are required to live.

Reason is the faculty by which we recognize and appreciate the facts of our existence in the present world, learn the laws of nature, extend the borders of our knowledge. Reason diligently used gives us science and law, order and purpose in things. Reason shows us the miracle of order, of uniformity in natural forces and facts, and makes us suspicious of the spurious miracle, which consists in a breach of the order. Reason recognizes that a God who makes and keeps His laws is incalculably greater than a God who capriciously alters or suspends them. It was the neglect of Reason which led medieval religion into the uneasy sea of miracles, which ultimately was the ruin of faith. In the stories of the saints the laws of nature were habitually suspended until the first law of nature seemed to be that there was no law. Even St. Augustine would recount the miracles wrought

by a dead saint, including three dead people brought to life again. *Even* St. Augustine, I say, because he was the strongest and most capacious intellect that had appeared, one might almost say has appeared, in the Christian Church. He ruled despotically the thought of Europe for a thousand years. But the effect was almost as bad as it was good. For him faith overrode reason.

Gibbon, in that famous twenty-eighth chapter, gravely tells of the abolition of idolatry, and of the worship of relics which took its place. The disastrous result of that irrational cultus was never more brilliantly stated; nor was that chapter ever more salutary than it is to-day.

"In the long period of twelve hundred years which elapsed between the reign of Constantine and the reformation of Luther, the worship of saints and relics corrupted the pure and perfect simplicity of the Christian model; and some symptoms of degeneracy may be observed even in the first generations which adopted and cherished this pernicious innovation.

"A superstitious practice, which tended to increase the temptations of fraud, and credulity, insensibly extinguished the light of history, and of reason, in the Christian world.

"If we enlarge our view to all the dioceses and all the saints of the Christian world, it will not be easy to calculate the fables and the errors which issued from this inexhaustible source. But we may surely be allowed to observe, that a miracle in that age of superstition and credulity, lost its name and its merit,

since it could scarcely be considered as a deviation from the ordinary and established laws of nature.

"The religion of Constantine achieved in less than a century the final conquest of the Roman Empire. But the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals."

The failure of Christianity to spread over the whole world, and to obtain complete control hitherto of any single country, is mainly due to the disastrous neglect of the Reason. A corrupt Christianity imagines rationalism to be its foe; but rationalism is its reformer. The worst foe of Christianity is irrationalism.

Reason gives us logic, recognizes laws of thought as well as laws of nature, shows us the fallacies to which the mind is liable, maintains the absolute value of truth, exposes the fraud of Duessa, enables the Red Cross Knight to avoid the snares and pitfalls of his errantry.

Reason leads us to the frontier, and bids us have faith if we would go farther. But though she could not take us across the frontier herself, she is quite willing to go with us, and to render her assistance all the way.

The worst foe of the spiritual life is an atrophied intellect. Even a morally bad man may repent and turn to God and be saved. But an imbecile cannot repent. And an intellect atrophied, or stifled, or warped, prevents the operation of spiritual forces, or turns them into superstition and fanaticism, and the injustice and pitiless cruelty which ever attend those dread twin sisters.

But there is also a danger that Faith should supersede the Will, and reduce the whole moral life to nullity. It is not only determinism in Philosophy, or materialism in science which denies freedom to the will. Faith itself may exalt the sovereignty of God until there is no room for the limited wills of men. It may assert that we are predestined from all eternity to be what we shall be. We are vessels of wrath or of mercy made by a potter whose will is irresistible. The moral law loses its significance; as Johannes Agricola sees, whatever sin he commits the determinate knowledge and forecounsel of God must save him.

> I have God's warrant, could I blend
> All hideous sins, as in a cup,
> To drink the mingled venoms up;
> Secure my nature will convert
> The draught to blossoming gladness fast.

But the moral nature is as truly a divine endowment as faith itself. To deny moral freedom is to lose moral worth. If we are simply fiats of an Almighty Will, and must become what He has predetermined us to be, goodness itself loses its meaning, and badness ceases to be bad. We only are what we cannot help being. Conscience, however explained or analysed, cannot be explained away or analysed into the meaningless. If, as Rabelais said, *Science sans conscience est la mort de l'âme,* faith which destroys conscience destroys itself. It was the great struggle in the evolution of religion to bring morality and religion into indissoluble connection. Hinduism and

Theosophy have not achieved that unification yet. Christianity emerging from the work of the Hebrew prophets, achieved it at once. But resurgent paganisms and sophistical theories are ever seeking to dissociate the two again. Even the doctrine of justification by faith may lapse into antinomianism. And every form of emotional religion, the excitement of the mysteries, or the unrestrained fervour of love feasts, may weaken and even break the restraints of the moral law. It may be true that morality can never of itself carry us to the spiritual heights, but it is certain that without it we can never get there, or at least never stay there. Faith has sometimes foolishly sneered at morality, but it is at her own peril that she does so. The pure in heart shall see God. The vision of God which comes to those in the muddy depths of moral corruption, may at first be that of an indulgent libertine, but turns inevitably into the consuming fire.

When Faith shows us God, brings us into real touch with Him, we find above all things that He is holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Many of us are not brought to Him by a sense of sin. We are brought to Him, and that awakens the sense of sin. When Isaiah sees the Lord high and lifted up, he cries out, "I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in a people of unclean lips." When Job realizes God, he puts his mouth in the dust and says, "I am vile." When Peter sees God in Christ, he falls down in awe and cries, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Thus faith, if it is really

faith, must emphasize and clarify the moral law. It makes the freedom of the will certain, and puts to shame the futility of determinism. It makes the moral law distinct and definite, showing the line of demarcation in the "borderland dim between vice and virtue." It shows the way, and makes it plain when we are tempted to turn to the right hand or to the left. By faith we find God and come into contact with Him. At once we find that He is the holy God; and His Divine power, Grace, flows into us —to will and to do what is right, to produce a hatred of sin, and a passionate desire to do what is pleasing to Him; to become, according to Christ's great thought, "perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

But there are other faculties which are sometimes, in the supposed interest of faith, suppressed or violated, especially the faculty of love, the faculty of imagination, and the faculty of perceiving and appreciating beauty.

It is curious that love should ever be subordinated to faith, when we remember 1 Cor. xiii, and the consummate revelation of Christianity: "God is Love." But this mistake has been made and probably is made now. Human love is sacrificed to the supposed inhibition of faith. Monasticism and asceticism have endeavoured to identify love with lust, and have waged a fierce war of renunciation against it. Our Lord's stern statement that in order to follow Him we must hate father and mother has been taken literally, instead of in the obviously hyperbolical sense which ordinary intelligence would recognize. In comparison with the love of Christ and the call of the Kingdom

of God, the love even of our parents is to be set aside. And no doubt many have been right in doing God's will as against the strongest and most exacting resistance that the nearest and dearest can offer. But Faith does not oppose Love, or depreciate it. Faith requires love as the surest way of achieving its object. Love, in all the various shades of its meaning, is of God. And the full play of the faculty of love is the only way of ever realizing the fulness of God, who is Love.

The sex instinct, liable as it is to so gross and ruinous perversions, is "a divine endowment of human nature," as well as a thought of God running through all orders of life. It is unwholesomely emphasized by Freud and his school of psychologists. But it is very wholesomely emphasized by Christ in His great saying about the relation of man and wife. Within the bounds of the moral law, it is God's sweetest gift to His creatures. Its intrinsic purity and beauty are not altered because those who throw over the moral law and cease to recognize the gift as God's, while landing themselves in disaster and disillusionment, taint the air of society with pollution. The sex instinct is not impure, but the fountain of purity; the love of man and wife, welded and strengthened by the love of children, makes the family, and God is the Father after whom every family in heaven and earth is named. Religion never did greater harm than when it cast suspicion on this exquisite gift of God, and suggested a pollution in the mode by which the Creator designed to continue His creation. When the

Church does her duty she puts marriage amongst the holy ordinances of God, and maintains its sanctity and its permanence, because it is the thought of God.

The Freudians trace many of the troubles of later years to the repression of the sex instinct. But psychology has, as we saw, shown the very wonderful fact that this instinct can be sublimated. Where for reasons which in many cases are decisive, the legitimate exercise of the sex instinct in a pure marriage is impossible, there is no need to seek gratification in illicit indulgences; the instinct may be raised to another plane, and find its fulfilment in the noblest of activities. This is psychology's greatest service to life. The sex instinct may realize itself in a great love for humanity, and in the strenuous and unceasing effort to help and to bless men. It may realize itself also in the spiritual realm by an intense devotion to God. In some of the great masters of monasticism, St. Francis or St. Bernard, this sublimation is seen at a great height. The love instinct in the saint of Assisi turns to a passion for the Creator and all His works. In St. Bernard the same instinct becomes a fervent devotion to Christ. There is something like this in the Hindu Chaitanya's passion for Krishna; but there is this considerable difference that in Krishna, as recognized in Hinduism, there is a strange and debasing vein of sexual passion; but in Jesus there is no touch of the kind, but only the revelation in human form of the divine holiness and love.

Yes, love is of God. It must be directed by His

spirit. It must be sublimated when the ordinary channels are closed. But it is to be cultivated, and exercised. We can never love too much, too passionately, too devotedly, so long as we take care that we love the right persons, the right objects, in the right spirit.

It is remarkable how the greatest poets are agreed upon this joyful truth. Dante's terrific poem ends with the line

L'Amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle.

Browning's first considerable poem, the one which strikes the keynote of all his work, "Paracelsus," has for its theme the failure of the great thinker and experimenter, because he left out of life that love which Aprile the poet had allowed to consume him.

When faith stifles love it destroys itself. When in the interests of Faith, or as then it is called The Faith, inquisitors hand over their fellow men to be burned, stifling love, if indeed it is not already dead, faith is no longer the divine endowment of human nature, by which man finds and knows and is united with God, who is love; but it has been changed into that ghastly opposite—the "faith" which devils have, for the devils, St. James says, believe and tremble.

The whole emotional part of our nature is indispensable to Faith. Perverted, it betrays us into misery, ruin and death, but controlled and used by Faith, it is the means by which all good is achieved, and all truth is won. It unites us with our fellow men in a true society, it makes us at home in Nature, as

part of the mighty order of things, it binds us to God in the blessed unity by which we become organs and instruments of His activity, the means by which He carries out His creative purpose and realizes Himself.

Imagination also is a faculty which Faith needs and uses. And yet in some religious systems it is discountenanced and repressed. It is repressed no doubt in the interest of truth. But it is one of the indispensable organs of truth. Loose and vagrant fancies may, to be sure, lead the mind away from truth and into delusions. When Plato said that he would banish the poets from his ideal state, it was because their stories discredited the gods and encouraged the people in vice. And we have some cause even now to complain that imaginative writers, in prose and verse, often corrupt and degrade the human mind. Imagination may be used for evil purposes, and so may become the enemy of Faith. None the less, this faculty, this creative faculty, is given to us by God to enable us to know Him and to serve Him. Ideas work on the subconscious mind as suggestions, and auto-suggestion means that we are able to present those suggestions to our own mind, which will set to work and accomplish ends beyond the reach of the will. Imagination may therefore construct the activities and the creations which we should desire to realize. It may work out the ideal character and the ideal life. It is best employed when it sets such images before the mind, as may work by auto-suggestion to make us and to set us to work aright.

It is imagination that sets the Lord always before the mind, and keeps Him there. He is there, one might say, anyhow; He works hitherto; He is not far from us; in Him we live and move and have our being. But Faith bids imagination to set Him there, to conceive His attributes, His activities, His oneness, His wholeness. So far from imagination being a diversion from the knowledge of God, it is the potent aid to that knowledge. It is the want of imagination, the neglect of imagination, that makes God to many a mere name, not a realized Person.

And if it be said that Jesus, historically revealed, is the main source of our knowledge of God—"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father"—yet it is only by the active exercise of the imagination that we can see Him as those eye-witnesses saw Him. The records of the Gospel are mere hints and outlines. Imagination sets to work to bring before the mind the image of the Son of Man, to follow His course, to see the import of what He said and did. And so with the whole course of revelation, which lies there in the various writings of the Bible. It is a dry and often confused record of facts and details, and opinions and precepts, until imagination comes into play and brings the whole process of the faith growing from Abraham to St. John. It is want of imagination which makes the dull reader of the Bible so uncritical, so undiscriminating, and therefore so unappreciative. The unimaginative mind, to show its faith, says that it would not only believe that the whale swallowed Jonah, but, if the Bible said so, that Jonah swallowed

the whale. Is that admired as sublime faith? Nay, it is sublime stupidity. Unimaginative literalists live in that obscure and choking air.

We owe much therefore to those who have a refined, disciplined and sanctified imagination: poets, scholars, preachers, who by this faculty make the things unseen —whether because they are in the past, or because they are in the future, or because they are behind the veil of the senses—live.

Dante, Spenser, Milton, Wordsworth, Browning, Francis Thompson, are among our greatest helpers in faith. So are scholars like Sir George Adam Smith or Adolf Weissmann. So are prophets, not always numbered among that shining company, like George Bernard Shaw, or H. G. Wells, who without any avowed interest in faith or knowledge of God, by their vivid imagination enable us to see things in the past and in the future, to see also things as they are. For whenever we see anything truly, we see in the background God.

Dulness and stupidity are no aids to faith: the immeasurable dulness of the preaching men has had much to do with its decay.

And that leads us to note another faculty of our human nature, which is an endowment of God, indeed a reflection of Himself, the recognition, the desire, the love, of beauty. Strange to say, this has often been treated as a foe to faith; and those who have been captured by it, for whom "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," have been put beyond the fold of faith.

But Faith needs this faculty, always purified and exalted, not debased, but never suppressed. There have been times when this faculty has claimed a pre-eminence and predominance, as in the words of Keats just quoted, which would destroy the proportion of the human spirit. But such occasional excesses are not so hurtful as the Philistine spirit which would put beauty and the quest of it outside the pale of religion. Beauty is not truth any more than it is goodness. But the good, the true and the beautiful, combine in God. He is the author of all three, and through all three together we come near to Him. And as Faith is the faculty by which we find Him, it uses truth, goodness and beauty as the means. The faculty therefore by which beauty is known and loved, should be a handmaid of Faith; and perhaps we may say, except as Faith's handmaid, is apt to go astray and miss the mark.[1]

There have been periods in the history of the Church, when this faculty has been used with great effect not only for the joy of man, but for the glory of God. The mosaists who decorated the churches of Ravenna brought a great gift to God. In the vault of the Baptistery they depicted the twelve apostles in such

[1] Mr. Middleton Murry, in his *Keats and Shakespeare*, tries to vindicate Keats from the criticism which is often passed on this line. "I have loved the principle of Beauty in all things"—Mr. Murry maintains that Keats means that in all things, good or bad, there is beauty. And this principle is one of Keats's great contributions to human thought. But this fine effort of Mr. Middleton Murry to make Keats the compeer of Shakespeare is more interesting than convincing. (*Keats and Shakespeare, a Study of Keats's Poetic Life from* 1816 *to* 1820, by John Middleton Murry, Oxford University Press.)

majestic forms and so radiant colours, that eyes first beholding them fill with tears of joy. The builders of St. Mark's, Venice, brought the same great gift to glorify God, and also to instruct men. For that surprising church, which on the outside rests the eye with its panels of coloured marble, and its recesses of pictured story, is within a shrine lined as it were with gold, telling the whole truth of the Bible in pictures which make the creation beautiful as the expression of the mind of God, and the story of Redemption more beautiful still as the utterance of His love. It is said that all this storied lore and orchestral massing of beauty upon beauty, can be turned into idolatry, and certainly this preaching of art has not made Venetians good or even unusually moral. Idolatry comes easily to the heart of man. And art is peculiarly liable to claim that it can exist for its own sake, and neglect the claims of reason, of conscience, of God.

'Tis the fault of Art's fine passion that it only seeks to know,
Not to perfect, any creature that its lot it may fulfil,
It has charity to bear with all the rankest weeds that grow
Unto any picturesqueness, and to leave them growing still.

But when beauty is neglected for fear of its abuse, and art is despised lest it should minister to another than God, the disaster is manifest and deplorable. It cannot be charged on the Reformation as such that it scorned the arts; it produced Holbein and Bach; and many noble shrines have risen in many parts of the world, which show that the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty may find a common

expression. But our Puritan England in its reaction from a prevalent idolatry was iconoclastic, and destroyed beautiful things under the impression that it was doing God service. Not knowing that God is Beauty, as well as Truth and Goodness, it thought to satisfy His truth, and to magnify His goodness, by trampling on His beauty. We have paid heavily for this error. Many a disfigured church and white-washed fresco remind us of the beauty that was defaced. But what is even worse, we were punished for our scorn of beauty by the towns which grew up, like the foul expression of our ugly hearts, towns without form or order or design, dominated by what Blake described as "satanic" mills, gasping for breath and health and spiritual life under thick canopies of defiling smoke. Fresh from Italian cities, or the creations of the Middle Ages, Berne or Nuremberg; nay, even after visiting Eastern cities with their undeniable pollutions, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Cairo, Delhi, Agra, one finds it difficult to believe how the human mind, unaided by Satan, could have produced anything so deadening and revolting as some of our English manufacturing towns. If only the faculty for beauty which is in us all, until it is dimmed by vice or defiled by superstition, could have found expression, this sinful and godless ugliness need not have been. We hear that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and I have heard of a worship of Satan in Paris, in which he turns eyes of ravishing beauty on his devotees. But he comes in our industrial centres quite untransformed, in his avowed darkness

and dirt, and takes possession. The beautiful earth is blighted, the shining rivers are polluted, the flowers and the trees fade away.

Mr. Ruskin tried to save Sheffield by a museum and England by his Guild of St. George. He did not live in vain. There is an awakening. But it needs perpetual reiteration : God is Beauty, nor can we serve Him aright if we scorn what is of the essence of His being.

But, to return for a moment in closing to the Will. On this faculty in the service of Faith much more ought to be said. The will is a great, though of course not an unlimited, power. There is a certain exercise of the will in using the faculty of Faith itself. And Faith, real faith, never asks for the destruction, or even the weakening, of the will. It is no object of faith to break the will and to make the human personality a supple instrument of a system or of an order. But when Faith rushes out to God, and apprehends Him, and loves Him, it finds His Will infinitely good and blessed, and the human will voluntarily and passionately adopts the divine.

> Our wills are ours, we know not how,
> Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

CHAPTER XIV

FAITH'S TRIAL

FAITH'S greatest trial is not that there are still two-thirds of the earth's inhabitants who have not heard the message of Christ. Nor is it that in Christendom itself there are to-day so many pullulating systems and claims which seek to supersede the pure truth of Christ. But what taxes faith to the utmost is that the Christian Church presents itself to the world in two forms which seem mutually exclusive. Catholicism, if we are to concede the name it monopolizes, unchurches all who are outside its borders. And Christianity has developed a life and a spiritual power outside those borders, challenging its authority and disputing its claim to the title of universal or catholic. It is this anomaly which makes faith in God so difficult, and yet it is this anomaly which rouses Faith to its supreme effort, and leads to the confidence in God, the certainty that the antagonism has its purpose, and that it will ultimately merge in a far richer unity.

The Church, which rose on the ruins of the Roman Empire, unconsciously not only took its place, but

inherited its spirit. It was a firm, authoritative unyielding organization. It claimed a sole knowledge of truth; its head was the vicegerent of God upon earth, endowed with the power of infallibly declaring what must be believed; for a time, in virtue of his semi-divine position, he claimed supremacy over all earthly sovereignties; he could depose kings, could lay kingdoms under an interdict; could release men from their moral obligations; could punish them for disobedience and resistance to the authority. The principle of the Roman Empire became that of the Roman Church.

Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

This strong unbending system could develop within; it could add to the articles of faith; it could establish the doctrine of transubstantiation, which for centuries had been opposed: it could declare that the blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, was herself immaculately conceived, more than eighteen centuries after the event; it could after ages of struggle set the Pope above Councils, and affirm for ever his infallibility. But while the Church could thus develop from within, it remained always the same, and any development which was not from within it absolutely condemned and banned. There were its laws and decrees, which could not be changed. If anyone would not obey them, he must be cast out of the Church, and, so long as it was possible, be handed over to the secular arm for condign punishment. Here, then was a Church, a human institution, claiming to be divine. Here were

men, ordinary men, acting for God, dictating what must be believed, prescribing conduct from the cradle to the grave, controlling the destiny of souls in the life beyond. This was Christianity; this was the system, the method, which Christ designed and established, when to Peter he said, "On this rock will I build my church."

Now there were and are some races of men, and some individuals in all races, that can admit this claim, and find in it a sense of security, a relief from responsibility, a guidance for the present life, a guarantee for the life beyond the grave. The Latin race, which evolved the system, finds it to its taste. This is Christianity adapted to that race; it is not Semitic, it is not Northern; but for the Mediterranean, and all nations that derive their culture from that source, this type of Christianity is congenial and satisfying. And in other races there are many of the Latin type; they find it easy to submit to a Church *authority*, believing it to be divine; they are relieved of the burden of deciding what is true and what must be believed; they gratefully accept the guidance, the relief from the burden of thought, the definite and prescribed duties of Mass and Confession and Penance, which give them the sense that they have done all that can be demanded of them in this world, and in view of the next.

In periods of doubt and disintegration this system, with its unswerving claim and its age-long growth, becomes very attractive. It seems the ark of refuge when the other ships are shattered, and the ship-

wrecked crews are tossed in the whirlpool of storm and wreck,

Rari nantes in gurgite vasto.

But there are other races of men, and in all races there are many individuals, to whom this system seems cramping and deadening, the obstacle to progress, the obscuration of truth. For these races and individuals Christianity, if it is to be identified with this system, becomes impossible. Peace cannot be sought at the price of liberty and truth and progress. Unbelief, agnosticism, non-religion, are preferable to an unreal and insincere acceptance of what is not true, of an authority which is open to question, of ideas which run counter to our best knowledge, our highest ideals, our noblest aims.

When the Northern races, and the like-minded individuals in the other races, began to realize that the system was not possible for them, they cast about to find if Christianity was really to be identified with it; or whether Christianity might not be a life and a truth other than it. They went back to the sources, to the Scriptures which the Church had always preserved and declared to be the authority in religion, though she had maintained that she alone was able to interpret them. Erasmus gave men the New Testament; Luther absorbed it. It became evident that Christianity as it came into the world through the person of Christ, and was communicated through the first apostles and prophets of the faith, was a fountain-head of truth and salvation, which could

be approached directly, immediately, without the intervention of the system. It also quickly appeared that the system which had sprung up from that great revelation was by no means identical with it, and had in many ways travelled far from it, until it had come unconsciously to be in some ways its opposite. The Reformation produced other systems which attempted to compete with and to supersede the Roman system. But the real value of the Reformation was not that it produced competing systems—Lutheran, Calvinistic, Anglican—but that it established the indisputable fact that Christianity could exist and flourish outside the Roman system. The experience of four centuries is now before us to show Christianity outside the Roman system, making nations, developing moral and spiritual life, spreading to the non-Christian nation, embracing science, developing the arts and crafts, leading in the world's progress.

That Christianity is not identical with the Roman Church; that, welling out from its fountain head, it can spread and occupy the world; that it can produce progress, and establish a culture free from dogmatic restrictions and repressions; that it can influence and affect human life at all points, by a certain and irresistible spiritual energy, without any sanction of Government, or application of external force; this is the result of the Reformation. Christianity is no longer the Roman Church; if not exactly in numbers, yet, in influence and significance for the world's future, Christianity is more outside than within that partially Christian Roman Empire.

It has won its right to be, and shown its power to work, without any donatives of Constantine, without the artificial guarantee of papal infallibility.

Thus two Christianities confront one another, or exist side by side; they seem antagonistic, mutually exclusive. No one can see how the one can give place to the other; no one as yet can advise how they can unite.

For many years of the last century, even for a whole generation, two men lived side by side, almost within a stone's throw of one another in the town of Birmingham, who typically represented these two Christianities, Robert William Dale and John Henry Newman. The former was the embodiment of Protestantism; the latter was the embodiment of Catholicism. They probably never met; they certainly never affected each other's position. Both were Christ's: both were whole-hearted in His service. Dale was the great citizen, living intensely in the life of his town, making his town; he was in all important movements, social and educational, which affected his country and his time. He wrote books of theological value and others of practical guidance; thus he was always shaping the thought and the life of the people. He was a product of the Reformation. He drew his religious beliefs and practices from the Bible, on which he brought to bear all the resources of knowledge and scholarship, that "more light and truth might break forth from the Word."

Newman lived in the oratory the life of the recluse. He had renounced the Reformation and all its works.

He had first initiated the Tracts which were to make the English Church catholic; and then realizing the futility of the effort, he had left the English Church and entered the Roman fold. He chafed against the dogma of papal infallibility, but when it was passed, he accepted it. His sceptical mind which with difficulty admitted religious truth, swallowed at once all the miracles which papal authority guaranteed, the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, the transference of the Virgin's house to Loretto, and all the rest. His unrivalled literary gifts invested the Roman system with a singular charm and drew many followers into it.

The two men lived and wrought side by side, both Christians, essentially antagonistic. The problem was ever before Birmingham, and indeed before the whole world (for both of these names were of world-wide reputation): How can Christianity produce two antagonistic types, so strong, so decisive, so uncompromising? How can two men of such ability, such sincerity, such knowledge, come to such opposite conclusions? If Dale was pleasing to God, how could Newman, his opposite, be? Or if Newman had been led by the kindly Light to leave his Evangelicalism and his Protestantism, and to become the advocate and defender of the system which he once condemned, how could Dale be divinely led and taught, who remained in the faith of his fathers, employing all his rare mental and spiritual gifts to defend it, and to develop it?

This is Faith's severest trial. Is it possible for

Faith so to see and grasp and know God, and so to love and trust Him, that the difficulty vanishes, and a higher unity is revealed in which Newman and Dale will be well agreed ?

Here is an incident which gives some hope for a solution of the problem : It is told by Dr. James Harvey, the Moderator of the United Free Church of Scotland. " Upon the Castle Rock ten years ago a company of German sailors from the *Blücher* were imprisoned, some of them in hospital suffering from severe wounds received in the naval engagement, most of them light-hearted and glad to be alive even in an enemy's country. One young lad from the Hartz Mountains lay in great suffering, and the shadow of death was on his face. He greeted me cordially when I spoke to him in his own tongue, and his eyes brightened when I repeated the words of the Twenty-third Psalm, which seemed to be familiar to him as to us ; and then, ere I prayed in the words of the Lord's Prayer, my friend Canon Stuart joined us, and, with uncovered heads, we united in the words that Christ had taught : *Unser Vater in dem Himmel.*

" There dying on his bed of pain was my national enemy, and on the other side of the bed my ecclesiastical foe, and I a Protestant minister. Beneath the barriers of race and language and creed we are one, members of the same Church, of the same flock, hearing the voice and following the leading of the one Shepherd."

Occasionally we touch one another and know we

are one. In a common experience of faith in Christ, and in the love which flows from that faith, we feel that the divisions are artificial, we recognize that Christ is showing Himself to those on either side of the barrier. These momentary visions, not infrequent to-day, are prophetic; they show what is some day coming, however baffled we may be at present to guess how it can come to pass.

When Catholics and Protestants mingle freely and get to know each other, apart from ecclesiastical interference, they quickly come to an understanding; they recognize a difference, but they are conscious of the unity that underlies it. They treat each other with kindly appreciation, agreeing to differ, but not agreeing to be parted. "Catholics," said Tom Kettle, that wittiest of modern Irishmen, "take their religion *table d'hôte*; Protestants *à la carte*." In that judgment lies the secret of our hope, that a time may come when liberty will be allowed to choose between *table d'hôte*, and *à la carte*.

The difficulty lies in the fact that the Roman Church cultivates and enforces exclusiveness. In its wiser counsels it knows that there is a soul of the Church, apart from the body, and that the soul includes multitudes of Christians who are not in the body. But it thinks it imprudent to say so; it holds to the maxim, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, and leaves the ignorant to assume that the ecclesia is the body, not the soul, the Roman system in all its rigid aloofness and self-sufficiency.

On the other hand, among Protestants there are

bitter memories of persecution. They know that the Church has never repudiated the right to persecute, and they think that, if it had the power now, it would do so still. Also after three centuries of reading and knowing the Bible, they are more conscious than ever of the glaring contrast between modern Catholicism and the religion of Jesus and His apostles. They see that Rome insists on things which have little or no place in the primitive Church, and lays little emphasis on charity and toleration which express the spirit of Jesus. Then the attitude of Rome to modern thought, to science, to the widening knowledge of the universe, seems to them a bar to progress, a check on the discovery of truth. Thus the desire for unity is checked by the fear of losing what was gained at a great cost, liberty, and the spiritual life which can only be preserved in the atmosphere of liberty.

Thus the two Christianities exist side by side, not so antagonistic to one another as they were in the early days of the Reformation, but presenting what appears to be an absolute *impasse*: How can their marges meet again? What can ever fill the abyss which yawns between them?

But where reason is baffled faith comes in, and faith rises to victorious convictions. When by faith we find God, and feel the love of God in our hearts, we are led to certain sure conclusions. We see the history of the Church in the light of Him who is equally concerned with authority and with liberty; of Him who has all power to coerce, but never coerces; of Him who has made Christ Lord of all, but never

forces the free will of man to obedience; of Him who deliberately and consistently rejects the Roman maxim,

Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

Entering into the mind of God, we recognize that Catholicism and Protestantism are both allowed in His ordering of history; there are Catholic values of importance in His eyes; the unity, the order, the teaching, the discipline, the production of the saints, the cultivation of a devotional life; but there are also Protestant values which come from His Spirit, and have been sustained and increased by His grace. We see that to God the simplicity of faith in Jesus, the direct reception of the Spirit, the free organization of those who believe; the openness of mind, the hospitality to new ideas and fresh discoveries; the vigorous independence, and the dislike of old forms which have lost their meaning; are the means by which faith is kept fresh and strong, and the world moves on in His plan of creative evolution.

Reverently accepting God's government of the Church, we cannot but conclude that Protestantism and Catholicism are both within His design, and that by each of them He is working out His plan, to reach His consummation.

It is not His will that either should destroy the other. Catholicism continues, in some quarters it advances; it never surrenders the idea that it is to recapture the whole of Christendom, and to be again what it was from the fourth to the fifteenth century, *the* Church in the West, one and undivided, giving

the law to the world and leading the authorities in chains. We must accept the will of God that Catholicism should continue. But it is equally clear that it is not His will to limit His grace and His Gospel to that strong, perhaps too strong, ecclesiastical system. Protestantism not only had its mission, when the Church had fallen into corruptions and decays; but equally it has its mission now, when the Church is active and aggressive, and comparatively speaking pure. That freedom, that spirituality, that enterprise and adventure, which will not allow religion to sink in ruts, or its abuses to continue unchallenged, are needed now and will always be needed, unless the Catholic system could find the way of including these vitalizing forces within its organization. If Protestantism were crushed out altogether, as for a time it was in France, as it still is in many parts of the Catholic world, it would come to life again. In this breathing active world that moves ever on, with new truths ever breaking in upon it, and new possibilities for human life and progress ever opening, there must ever be those who assert their freedom and strike out again for new shores and continents in the realm of the spirit.

And if Faith, assured of God, sees that these two Christianities must continue and must live side by side, neither subduing or destroying the other, it must cherish the expectation that God will eventually bring them to understand one another, to surrender the futile internecine strife, and to co-operate in the work which God has given them to do, not each apart, but

both together. Faith laughs at impossibilities and cries, "It shall be done." This is the victory which overcomes, even our faith.

The existence of such Catholics as Lord Acton and Baron von Hügel, shows that the whole view and temper of the Catholic Church may alter. Lord Acton was all his life preparing to write a history of Liberty. The materials were accumulated, though his fastidious determination to make it complete prevented it from ever being achieved. But there is the fact not to be forgotten; that this English Catholic, true to the spirit of his country, was not so much concerned for the authority of his Church as for the liberty which he would claim for all in it or outside it. No Protestant ever lashed the tyrannies of the Popes and of ecclesiastics more vigorously than he did. The Roman Church bore in patience his castigations, and perhaps his teaching has sunk into her heart.

Baron von Hügel has been recognized in the last twenty years as the greatest theologian in our country. German by birth, but English by culture, a true son of the Church, but living all his life in the atmosphere of Protestantism and freedom, he has exercised an astonishing influence on the thought and religion of his time. And that influence has been all in the direction of a larger and more inclusive view. His interest is in religion and not in ecclesiasticism. In his own Church he sees only what is good; and what is good in other Churches he sees.

It is therefore plain that if such men as Lord Acton and Baron von Hügel ever gained a preponderating

influence in the Roman Church, the whole outlook would alter. That may seem a very remote possibility; for the Roman system is above everything clerical; the clergy are the church; and the laity live only on sufferance. These scholars and thinkers and saints are left unmolested, because they can at any time be repudiated; what they say is only the irresponsible utterance of the lay mind.

How the Roman Church can ever find a voice apart from its clergy, and how the whole congregation of Christ's people in it can ever give effect to their larger views and more cordial charities, we cannot see. How the Church can ever escape its fatal claim to infallibility, may puzzle the wisest to-day. But the spirit of the age moves in a definite direction, so does the Spirit of God. All things tend to light and liberty and charity and inclusiveness. And Faith may gain a full assurance that in His good time, the Spirit of God will move on the chaos of ecclesiastical divisions and rivalries, and a Cosmos will emerge.

The world is so unified; thought and knowledge flow so freely through mankind; nations, parties, Churches are so drawn together, and come to know each other so much better, that what even a generation ago seemed impossible may, silently but surely, come to be.

The intelligence and candour of the Roman Church, by the grace of God, will one day come frankly to admit the Christianity beyond its borders. In a spirit of humility, and seeking to glorify God, Popes and Councils will take into account the discoveries, the

achievements, the religious life, of the Protestant churches. Looking at the countries whose culture has been predominantly Protestant, and comparing them with the countries whose culture has been wholly Catholic, Rome will recognize that the superiority of the Catholic culture is not beyond dispute, and in any case the Protestant culture has justified its existence by certain definite types of life and character.

Directly Rome's attitude to Protestants alters, Protestant feeling to Rome will become different Roman exclusiveness produces in those who, outside the Roman fold believe in Christ and have a genuine Christian experience, the feeling that Rome cannot be Christian.

I remember a conference in the Jerusalem Chamber at which Cardinal Manning and one of his clergy were present. And when we all wanted to bow in worship and pray for God's blessing upon the proceedings, we were obliged, in deference to the two Catholics, to steal away into the unlighted chancel of the Abbey, and offer our prayers to our God.[1] When fellow

[1] A recent incident brings out this extraordinary exclusiveness of Rome:

THOUSANDS ABSENT.

ROMAN CATHOLICS AND WAR MEMORIAL.

Admiral Lord Jellicoe unveiled Preston's war memorial yesterday afternoon before 20,000 people.

The Roman Catholic community, which constitutes one-third of the town's population, refrained from attending because their efforts to confine the proceedings to a civic ceremony, on the ground that they were not allowed to be present at any religious service other than their own, had failed to move the authorities who arranged the service in which all other denominations joined.

The memorial, erected to the design of Sir Gilbert Scott, R.A., stands in the market square, and is 70 feet high.

Daily News, June 14, 1926.

Christians cannot in the common name approach their God together, the inevitable inference is that one side or the other is not Christian. But when the Roman Church recognizes Christians beyond her pale, and, without surrendering her distinctive faith, ventures to admit that all who call on Jesus Christ are united by His Person, Protestants will look on Catholics and their claims with a new sympathy and understanding.

And if the two Christianities can ever come into frank and friendly conference, not with the view of maintaining the differences, or of proselytizing one another, but simply to appreciate one another's position and to recognize one another's Christianity, there may grow up a general recognition of the fact that the two forms are within the counsel of God. In that happy day a new hope of winning the world to Christ will emerge.

For, if it is perplexing and distressing to us who are Christians, to find these two separate ideas in perpetual conflict, and the two Church systems in sharp and critical division from one another; it must disturb and repell the non-Christian world to the point of scorn and indifference, to find one Christian Church on the tracks of another denying its Christianity and undoing its work.

And if, as to the eyes of Faith it seems plain, God loves the world and wishes to save it, and sent His Son into the world to accomplish its salvation, it must be His design that the Churches should agree, should cease to harry and to depreciate one another,

and should find the way of mutual recognition, and so far as practicable, deliberate co-operation.

Thus, though it is Faith's greatest trial that the Church is so divided, and that the divided parts regard each other with such unsympathetic and even hostile eyes, it is also Faith's greatest triumph to transcend the differences, and, receiving the light of God, to labour and pray for the better day when Christians will not contend with one another, but will contend together for the unifying faith.

CHAPTER XV

MEN WHO HAVE NOT FAITH

PERHAPS the apostle was not referring to faith in the sense in which we have been using it, as the faculty but only to the exercise of the faculty, by which we know God. He is thinking of those who do not use the faculty, leave it dormant, unrealized. But yet the words convey a disturbing thought: Are there human beings without the faculty by which we know God, hold communion with Him and are directed by Him? There are innumerable instances of people who are without one faculty or even without several. There are the deaf and the blind, there are the short-witted, there are those who have hardly any memory, there are the colour-blind, there are those who have no ear for music, like Charles Lamb, who, with all other faculties so finely wrought, found music a mere torment of disagreeable and meaningless sounds. Without searching into those races of prehistoric man, that utterly vanished, or examining the backward races to-day, are we not led to think that among the people we know there are some who are entirely devoid of the religious sense, people who have not the faculty by which the human mind comes into touch with the

Divine? Lord Morley remarked in his fine sketch of Voltaire, that the great Frenchman, in some ways the greatest and most typical of Frenchmen, was entirely without the spiritual sense. And in reading the memoirs of John Morley himself, it sometimes strikes the reader that the fine and cultured mind, which could range so freely over all human affairs, was entirely blind and unresponsive in the direction of God. And if the greatest of human beings, like Voltaire and Morley, are without the faculty which we have been considering, how much more are the commoner and coarser natures, the unworshipping multitudes, who find their only interest in the flesh and its appetites, sterile on the spiritual side? To-day, observing the character and conduct of men in general, one might reach the conclusion that most men have not faith. "When the Son of Man cometh will he find faith on the earth?" was a question put at the beginning. Is a time coming when the answer would be in the negative? Is M. Guyau's description of the non-religion of the future about to be realized? Is that human race which from the beginning felt after God, if haply it might find Him, and found its way through many experiments and failures from animism and fetishism, to polytheism, henotheism and theism, at last to the knowledge of God as our Father, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus—is that human race, after such searching and struggling, and such apparent discovery and achievement, to end at last in agnosticism, in the repudiation of the faculty by which God is known?

There is something strangely disconcerting in the mind of what are presumably Christian people. I chanced on a man the other day; he was a steward on a liner; a good, efficient steward, unfailing in his duties, though a little grim and superior in his manner. Knowing the peculiar difficulties of those "who go down to the sea in ships," I wondered if I could help him. I asked him therefore in a quiet moment when he was smoking his cigarette on deck, whether he had the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. With a laugh, not rude or derisive, he replied that he never troubled his head about "those things." Christians were so divided and so quarrelsome that he kept clear of them. He thought that Buddhism or Mohammedanism might be preferable; for these religions, he supposed, had no such divisions. His ship plied between Burmah and England, and he preferred, it would seem, Buddhism as seen at Rangoon to Christianity as seen in Liverpool. He had, he said, been obliged to work from his youth upward; he knew and cared nothing about his fellow-stewards or others on board; he not only knew nothing about God, but was determined to know nothing. Before leaving the ship I tried once more to awaken his interest. I reminded him that Christ bade all who were weary and heavy laden to come unto Him and rest. "That He has done for me," I said, "and He will do it for you if you will let Him." Again came that strange laugh, not intentionally rude, if a little impatient, not derisive, if a little superior. "But you see," he said, "I don't want rest, but work." And he hurried away to get the luggage of the passengers

ready for the tender. Certainly here was one who "had not faith." The lascars and the Hindus at work on the ship had their faith, but this intelligent and efficient Englishman had no faith. The faculty, if it had been there, was repressed, silenced, nullified. Perhaps there was no other mind in that state on that ship, but could one find a ship on the four seas without one at least in that state? And on shore, is there a city, a village, or even a street in any English town, that has not at least one who is in that state? There must be millions even in the most Christian country in the world, who have not faith, who either have not the faculty at all, or have so neglected or misused it that it ceases to work. The many who are without God constitute a distressing problem to those who have faith, and by faith have found God.

But there are two things which this problem forces upon us. One is the need of trusting God; the other is the need of our representing God to men aright: for how many of those who "have not faith" have lost it because of the blindness and stupidity and narrowness of those who have it?

The need of trusting God, The Judge of all the earth, is doing and will do right. We have, indeed, used the faculty of Faith amiss unless this has become the assured first principle of our life. We have not known Him until we have known that He is Love. We know Him as He loves us, and as we love Him; and knowing Him as He loves us, we know that He loves all, that He hates nothing that He has made;

es He has made in His own image He and the creatu love eternally.

must and doeLodge, in an address delivered in March

Sir Olive and he spoke as a physicist who has as 1926, saida knowledge of nature and of science as one completen contain: "I tell you that the universe is brain cnd splendid beyond our imagination. Let us great ke a pitiful mean outlook. Nothing is too great not to good to be true. We cannot imagine things or ter than they are. The more you penetrate into bee secrets of nature, the more overwhelmed you are tlith wonder, love and praise. Our present existence on this planet is but an episode, a temporary adventure to be followed by higher and further adventures. Do not fear; fear is torment. Perfect love casteth out fear. The universe is ruled by perfect love. That is my message." [1]

That must be the message of all who by the Master Faculty of Faith know God. A great man of science may know with a greater fulness, but the plainest and humblest of men may know with an equal confidence, that God is Love. Science may confirm it, as now it seems to do, or science may seem to dispute it, as for a century or so it did, but all who have and use the faculty of faith have been assured that He is Love. Often they have been puzzled, and, as children with their parents, they have misunderstood, and have not seen how to reconcile His action, or inaction, with His nature as Love; but as a helpless child nestles into the

[1] Report of a sermon in Christ Church, Greyfriars, from the *Manchester Guardian*.

heart of a mother, whether he understands or not, so myriads of lowly hearts by the faculty of Faith, have nestled, and do nestle, into the heart of God.

And with that assurance, the problem of those who have not faith becomes tolerable. It is not solved; the difficulty is not removed; but it takes its place with the insoluble mysteries by which we are surrounded, mysteries which, though they perplex and sadden us, do not shake our confidence in Him, but rather require us to turn to Him and cast ourselves upon Him with a greater urgency.

But knowing Him as Love, we know that He can deal tenderly and wisely with those of His children who have not faith. If it be true that they are defective, and are bereft of a faculty which most men possess, He will not expect from them any more than He does from His creatures beneath man, the devotion and service which He expects from their more favoured fellows. Caliban may exist in God's sight without the demand that he should be Prospero or Miranda.

But if they have the faculty, unused or abused, and rendered useless—and this seems the more general account of those who have not Faith—God is the Father of the prodigal son, and may wait for the return of His misguided children with a patience which to us, poor creatures of time, is almost inconceivable. In the universe, as science shows it us, there is room, and in the countless millions of years which science suggests to us, there is time for all the souls that ever were souls, from the first strictly human being to the latest who

shall be, to return as prodigal sons to the home of the Father.

They therefore who have Faith need not despair of those who have not. They have faith in God, and as Christ said, they can say to the mountain, " be removed and be cast into the sea," and it will be done. They recognize that very little is possible with men ; but with God all things are possible. The last and the least and the lost are within the scope of Christ's redemptive purpose.

But this brings us to consider the second need, the need of representing God aright to men. Those who have faith, the Church and its leaders, are, to a degree which may well appal them, the cause why those who have not faith have it not. It is not only the narrowness, the bigotry, the censoriousness, the hypocrisy of believing people that have driven many into unbelief. That is a great, unreckoned account which none of us have dared to face. But the ignorance, the irrational dogmatism, the habit of subordinating truth to what is assumed to be The Truth, have driven a whole generation into a repudiation of Faith. The crying need, the pressing duty, of all who have Faith, whether in the rank of those who have authority, or in the position of simple believers, is to show their faith by accepting new truth, by surrendering untenable positions, by frankly giving up articles of faith which are no longer credible, and repudiating dogmas which violate the moral sense as, under the influence of Christ, it has come to maturity.

We must, for example, square our religious beliefs

with the knowledge we possess of the universe to which we belong. The three-storied conception of the world, the heaven above and hell beneath the earth, has never been even conceivable since the Copernican doctrine was established. Heaven and hell are not local, but in another realm of being, which we only enter when we leave locality and temporality, for a spiritual existence. Heaven and hell are the continuation of the life which has begun on this planet in space and time.

It may be said, it is said now with a kind of despairing emphasis: "But the Bible presents that three-storied conception, and the Bible is the Word of God, and must be true." A man of remarkable intelligence and influence said to me the other day: "I have come to distrust all science and to go back to the Word of God as final." That is the attitude which produces unbelief. Science, that is verified and established knowledge of the world in which we live, is just as much the Word of God as the Bible is. The Bible is the Word of God, but not in the sense that it was written by God, and made an inerrant and infallible authority upon all subjects.[1] It is the Word of God in this sense, that it is the record of a revelation of God, the clearest and best that man has received, a revelation enlarging from age to age in the history of a gifted people, until it reached its consummation in the Son of God incarnate, who died for the sin of the world, and opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. But the literature that gives us this revelation contains a good deal besides—it is limited always by the age in which its

[1] *Vide* Chapter III, "The Word."

several parts were composed. It always accepted the science of the time, the current social and moral beliefs; it always awaited a fuller knowledge, and required men to accept what should be thereafter discovered. With regard to the cosmos and the stellar universe, it remained to be corrected by Kepler, Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, Herschel and perhaps Einstein. Nothing is so productive of ultimate unbelief as the dogmatic assertion of those who have faith, that the Bible overrides knowledge, and knows from the beginning all that will be discovered to the end.

Those who have faith, but have not been able to see how the Book which brings to men the Revelation of God may yet betray ignorance of the cosmic system, may yet present imperfect moral ideals, may yet be subject to the uncertainties which attend all historical records, and the transmission of all written material; those who adopt such a formula as: "If God is wrong in His geology, He may be wrong in His theology," or such a statement as: "If the whale did not swallow Jonah, we do not know that Christ redeemed the world." All those believing and well-meaning people who bind up the faith with ignorance and would defend it by obscurantism, and the number of such believers, in the Roman Church and in the Protestant Churches, is large enough to make it plausible that this sad twilight of knowledge and ignorance is the Christian verity—these are the cause in times of widening knowledge and maturing moral judgment that there are so many in Christendom itself who "have not faith."

They do not see how they libel God by attributing to Him acts and thoughts which the moral sense condemns. Is God really, asks the modern mind, an Almighty Power who commanded Israel to exterminate the Canaanites ; a jealous God, who struck Uzzah dead for incautiously touching His ark ? If the Church, or an individual Christian replies : Yes, God is such a being, because the Bible says so, the Church or the individual that gives such an answer is making those " who have not faith."

It is the pressing need of our time to show clearly and convincingly how the Bible is a revelation of God, and how the final revelation of God that it gives us is the highest and best and purest that man has attained, and yet to admit that in that great literature which took a thousand years to grow, there is much which is inconsistent with that highest, best and purest knowledge which the Book has given us. To correct the whole by the final result, and to present God, as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a word as Love, is the only way of reducing the confusion of our religious thinking, and of bringing out the message which commands the belief and devotion of mankind. This is the meaning for us to-day of the Master's word : " I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." While we lift Him up, but at the same time lift up, in conjunction with Him, an impossible cosmogony, an imperfect morality, a claim for historical accuracy, where such accuracy cannot be, we blur the vision and confound the thought of our fellow men. Our Faith has come to us through the Bible, but it

never tells us that everything in the Bible must be correct. We have found Christ in the Scriptures; they are they which testify of Him; but the Christ whom we have found is the Lord of the Scriptures, as He is the Lord of the Sabbath. He is the higher critic. It is He who says: Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think that ye have eternal life, but ye will not come unto Me, that I may give you life."

The foolish confidence and certainties of the Church —using the term in the widest sense—are the main reason of the doubt and unbelief in the days to which we have come. The Church presumes to define God, and to put into propositions things which are beyond the capacity of the human mind. She makes a mental image and calls it God. She requires the world to bow down and worship that idol of her making on pain of death. The Athanasian Creed is the extreme case of this impertinence, but the spirit of that Creed is still rampant in Christendom. As an attempt to put into formulæ for recitation the transcendental fact of the Blessed Trinity, it is interesting and even useful. But to prefix to it the threat that whoever does not hold it as the Catholic faith shall without doubt perish everlastingly, is to invite and to incite to complete agnosticism. In times of ignorance and superstition the terrific threat may force multitudes into the Church, for men are naturally ruled largely by fear. But the time inevitably comes when a man says: "Is that really God's will? Is He going to condemn to everlasting destruction all who cannot accept this highly paradoxical description of His threefold Being? If

so, suffer me to ask what kind of a Being is this God who makes this demand upon thinking men? Is this the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is this God Love?" The firmer the attitude of dogma on the subject, the more sure is it to produce men who have not faith.

For nineteen centuries the Church has consigned the wicked—and especially those who are so wicked as not to submit to her authority—and even the heathen whom she has failed to teach—to eternal fire of torment. She would have us believe that in the awful prison which Dante saw, over which are written the words "Abandon hope all ye who enter there," the countless millions of humanity who have not entered the Church are undergoing tortures which imagination shudders to conceive. She quotes or misquotes words of Christ to support this terrifying threat. She believes that the fear of Hell has led men into righteousness. When scholars and thinkers have shown that Christ never could have taught such a doctrine, because He was sure that God was "Our Father," these pioneers of truth have been condemned, and their works have been put on the Index. The idea that perfect love casts out fear is practically denied; fear is too useful a method of securing obedience to be lightly cast out. While the bogey is real men are awed; but when they find that it is only a bogey, they surrender the faith which has been enforced by it. The method by which this modern world will be brought back to faith would seem to be very different. But when it is more widely understood it will tell widely, and perhaps rapidly.

Better days are coming. At the Oxford Conference of Modern Churchmen in August 1925 Professor Caldecott summed up the influences which have been at work during this first quarter of the twentieth century, to modify and correct our religious thought and life. They are these five :

(1) The acquiescence of *Science* in limitations which prevent interference with the areas of philosophical and religious belief.

(2) The increasing adoption of judgment by *Values*, supporting what I cannot but think has been at least an undercurrent in religious belief at all times.

(3) The increase of confidence in the supremacy of the concept of *Personality*.

(4) The extension of the area of spiritual experience by inclusion of sane and healthy *Mystical Experiences*, whether sporadic or systematized.

(5) The extensive, though not universal, reading of the history of religions as disclosing, within revelations of the universal kind, *special Revelations* which have increased man's knowledge of God and given fresh inspirations to the religious life.

These changes which the first quarter of the century has seen point to a transference of the proof of religion from without to within. Thought begins with the external ; man's first inquiries are about the Cosmos ; slowly he learns to look within, to find himself, and to discover there what he failed to find without.

The faculty of Faith, at first hardly noticed, taken for granted and never examined, at last declares itself among the other faculties as supreme. Science has its

boundless realm of discovery and victory. But thought, philosophical and religious, has another realm equally boundless, equally real and more knowable, more certain. In the scientific realm candour may find a Creator, or miss Him. But in the psychological realm, God, however little or much we find of Him, is indubitable. He is involved in our Personality: because I am I know He is; and I may find *what* He is by paying attention to all that is implied in the fact *that* He is. This knowledge of God is the supreme value, far transcending what is called scientific truth. In the recognition of God, so certain though so far beyond our knowledge, in the practice of His presence, in conscious and deliberate communion with Him, there is an experience, mystical perhaps but intensely practical, which affords the final and perfect proof of His existence and of His nature. God within is necessarily much more sure than God without, though He is the same.

And in that experience, as one by one we enter into it, we realize how God has revealed Himself in prophets and seers, in thinkers and saints; we even obtain glimpses of the mind of Christ, and understand at least partly, how the supreme revelation of God was in the mind which could say: "I and My Father are one"; "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." We are probably entering on a period in which religion, greatly simplified and brought near to every human mind, will carry conviction and unite, instead of dividing, the different types, classes, nations and even races, of men. The transfer of the interest from historical to psycho-

logical grounds will make faith more possible to all, and will find the word not in the heights nor in the depths, but within. The authority of religion will not be in a Church nor in a Book, but in a Person, acclaimed as the supreme pattern of human life, and the embodiment of man's spiritual relation to God, and yet not left outside as a mere character in history, but brought within as a Law and a Love, controlling and impelling all thought and all action. Towards that the ages move, a humanity harmonized and united in Christ.

The most widely spread and most ancient of the great universal religions of the world is Buddhism. In the *Diamond Sutra* there is a passage attributed to Gotama, which the late Dr. Timothy Richard called " one of the most remarkable prophecies in the whole range of sacred literature " :

" Five hundred years after my death there will arise a religious prophet who will lay the foundation of his teaching, not on one, two, three, four or five Buddhas, nor even on ten thousand Buddhas, but on the Fountain of all the Buddhas ; when that One comes, have faith in him, and you will receive incalculable blessings." [1]

He came. He comes. In Him all men will some day have faith.

[1] *The Quest for God in China*, by F. W. S. O'Neill, p. 149 (Allen and Unwin).

CHAPTER XVI

THE CREED

THE three creeds of the Church have their value, and are certainly full of interest; for they summarize the things which in the early and formative period of the Church, let us say the first eight centuries after Christ, Christians believed. The *Apostolicum*, or Apostles' Creed, was supposed to be compiled by each of the twelve apostles suggesting the article of belief which he wished to include. The Nicene Creed was an enlargement in view of the Council of Nicæa, which sought to secure the proper deity of Christ. The Athanasian Creed was a kind of heroic effort to state the doctrine of the Trinity, to make the *tria in uno* resonant and impressive, if not rationally conceivable.

These creeds preserve the earliest interpretations of the Christian Scriptures. There is nothing in them which cannot be supported by proof texts, unless it be the damnatory clause of the Athanasian.

But the creeds do not and cannot express the faith of to-day. Knowledge has grown, especially in the last hundred years, and the three-story view of the universe which the creeds assumed, has become meaningless. "He ascended into Heaven; He descen-

ded into Hell" must be expressed in very different language, if it is to be true to our knowledge of the system in which we live. The resurrection of the body, which Judaism and afterwards Mohammedanism could accept without hesitation, and which many Judaic expressions in the New Testament countenance, is neither credible nor consoling to the mind which is brought up in the atmosphere of science. To-day probably the majority of those who say "I believe in the resurrection of the body" either do not think of what they are saying, or mean by it something different from what they say. Science has very rapidly altered the outlook. And while even a generation ago it was generally believed that the bodies would emerge from the graves at the Resurrection, and the particles of bodies that had been burnt, crushed, or otherwise disparted, would be miraculously gathered together and restored, that the risen bodies might pass to the great assize, at present educated people regard all that as mere imagery, and believe in the life after death without any thought of reviving the physical frame which was reverently laid in the ground, or ruthlessly blown to pieces in the horrid atrocity of war. There are minds which have no moral scruple in reciting these articles of the creed in which they do not believe; by a mental reservation they *mean* what is not expressed, and they console themselves with the sense of unity and continuity in the recitation of formulæ that have been used by succeeding generations for nearly two thousand years.

But mental reserves and solemn asseverations which

no longer mean what they say, are a danger and a disease. The feebleness of religion in the modern world is largely due to this habit of expressing our faith in phrases which are merely traditional, this habit of saying what we do not mean in the hope that we are, in so doing, reverent and religious.

He requires truth in the inward parts, to Him lying lips are an abomination. But the insufficiency of the creeds does not lie in their inclusion of things which are not to the mind of to-day conceivable, but rather in their exclusion of much which to our minds now is essential.

The first generations of Christians naturally wished to assert certain ideas and statements of the Scriptures which were salient and striking; and the creeds express these salient and striking declarations about God and Christ, and salvation and eternal life. But the most significant things in the New Testament did not attract attention; they were inward, profoundly spiritual, mystical; these deeper things escaped attention, and yet they were essential. The most remarkable example of these omissions is, that the creeds say nothing about either the life or the teaching of Jesus; they pass at a leap from the birth to the Cross. And yet in that vacant gap lie all the saving powers of the Gospel. The sermon on the mount, the commandments which sum up the decalogue, the prodigal son, the good Samaritan, the inner consciousness of Jesus, in which the Father is revealed, the faith in Jesus which saves; the invitation "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden";

the promise " Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out " ; the union with Christ, as branches in the Vine ; the feeding on Him, as it were eating His flesh and drinking His blood ; the gift of the Holy Spirit, to reproduce His life in the believer, to impart spiritual gifts, to empower the life for service ; indeed all this, which is the marrow and the reality of the Christian faith, is omitted from the creeds.

An emphasis is laid on Christ coming to judge the quick and the dead, but there is no reference to His saying, " Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." The forgiveness of sins is mentioned but not connected with the work of the Saviour. The life everlasting is asserted, but no hint is given as to how it is attained. When in the Athanasian Creed the Father, the Son and the Spirit are brought together as one God, this Divine Being is made not only a mystery but a puzzle ; while what we believe now, and what in their hearts Christians from the beginning have always believed, is not the mathematical riddle of a Trinity, but the practical truth, that we know God as the Father in the Son, and the Son is a living present reality to us by the Spirit.

The creeds therefore, while they are historical monuments for all time, must be reshaped and restated, as knowledge grows, as spiritual experience deepens, as the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns. If we are to have a creed which expresses the real belief of to-day, we must, as it were, reshape the ancient creed, in view of the altered outlook, which science and spiritual enlargement have given us.

The articles of the old creed remain, but the emphasis must be different. From the truths and facts of the New Testament some must be included, some may be omitted. No creed can express all the truths and facts of the Gospel. But a creed for to-day may bring out much that was in the first instance regarded as secondary or less important.

We in this present age are very chary of stating transcendental realities, we have learnt great caution in attempting to define God; we feel no confidence in discussing the relation of the human and the Divine in the person of Jesus. We shrink instinctively from propounding a Trinitarian dogma. Moreover, science has made us very diffident in describing the origin of things, or the constitution of the universe Ever since the dawn of modern science we have been altering our conception of that universe little by little. The planet on which we live was displaced from the centre, relegated to the circumference. Man hesitated to think of himself as central or as of primary importance. He was forced little by little to recognize himself as one in the numerous species of organisms; the most developed, in a sense the crown of the series, but yet in the series. He began to suspect that he had, through the long centuries and transformations which geology revealed, evolved out of lower forms of life. The mystery of being grew upon him; the starry sky opened out into unimaginable distances and magnitudes. And then, to crown his sense of ignorance and impotence, the matter which once seemed the one solid reality with which he was in contact, opened up

into an unimaginable complexity. The one solid reality was found to be merely a complex of electrons moving with indescribable velocity in what is, despite its minuteness, a vacuum. Before these mysteries, these gradual meltings of the familiar into the inexplicable, the modern mind has become afraid to dogmatize. Transcendental truths are no longer a sure starting-point for a creed. We are disinclined to metaphysics; we find no comfort in weaving idealistic systems. We try to stand firm on experience, on verifiable experience, and to eschew flights of fancy or of creation. Instead of starting from the unsearchable truths of God and of the universe, which our fathers supposed to be established and sure, we start from our own consciousness, from the play of facts on our own intelligence, from things which are certain, to feel our way as far as we can in the unknown and inconceivable. Our creed must be psychological rather than dogmatic; it must grow up from within, not be imposed from without.

In the beginnings of thought man disregarded the facts of the universe, and still more the facts of his own mind, and wove imaginary systems in which a guess was the first premiss, a wish the second, and the conclusion a castle without foundations, a castle in the air. The greatest philosopher of antiquity, and perhaps of all time, was Plato. In the *Timæus* we have his account of creation, of the origin and of the significance of man. It is very wonderful; not very dissimilar from the account in the Bible. God made man, and for a high destiny. But in complete ignorance

of scientific facts he mingles with his sublime thought what seem to us puerile absurdities. We have acquired enough science to make us afraid of the crudities of our ignorance. We will not say that we know what is only a matter of surmise.

Another constituent of the modern mind is the recognition of the uncertainties of historical records and written documents. We feel instinctively that things in a distant past can only for us be probabilities; we know that documents however carefully guarded cannot escape the changes and corruptions of time. And thus we cannot build upon facts or events of long ago as men in a former age did; the "it is written" which once was so conclusive, the end of controversy, the establishment of truth, is not decisive. What is written has to be verified. The verified or verifiable has to be disentangled from the traditional, the legendary, the mythical, the errors of ignorance or even of falsity.

A great shaking has come to this modern world, caused chiefly by the extension of knowledge, knowledge of the whole human race, its religions and superstitions, knowledge of the universe and of the constitution of things, knowledge of the past, and knowledge that what once passed as knowledge, was not knowledge. The foundations have seemed shaken. Men have taken refuge in Agnosticism on the one hand, or in a blind submission to authority on the other; just as in a deluge, the drowning creatures cling to any spar, or even to a straw.

Our creed has to be shaped in these cataclysmic and

seismic conditions. We have only one supreme obligation, viz. to find the Truth and to hold to it. No fiction or soothing fallacy will do. We must have what is, what we can be sure of, our "Here stand I, I can no other."

When to thy ship in tempest hell appears,
And every spectre mutters up more dire
To snatch control,
And loose to madness the deep kennelled fears,
Then to the helm, O soul!

Last, if upon the cold, green mantling sea,
Thou cling with Truth alone to the last spar
Both cast away,
And one must perish, let it not be he
Whom thou art sworn to obey.

Herbert Trench, in these lines, expresses the religious temper of to-day as faithfully as, in calmer times, his father, Archbishop Trench, expressed the religious tone of his day.

The creed which we to-day can use with complete conviction, must start not from the heights of a philosophical theism, but from Jesus Christ,[1] that Jesus whose life and words and works are sketched in the Gospels, that Christ whose presence and spiritual activity after death occupy the whole of the New Testament. More than ever to-day the world believes in Him. Our highest symbol of the Divine, Carlyle called Him. But the world goes farther than that.

[1] Professor James Denney thought the Christian Creed could be expressed in a single sentence:
"I believe in God through Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord and Saviour."

It sees in Him the true pattern of human life. It hears in His words the noblest ethical teaching man can conceive. It finds in His Cross the revelation of that self-sacrifice, that giving of self for others, which it knows to be the secret of blessedness and the very essence of the Divine nature.

We are not prepared to-day to refine on the twofold nature of Christ: the question which divided Arius from Athanasius, and split the Church in two for nearly four hundred years, is too abstract and too remote to engage a generation trained in the scientific methods But none the less, nay all the more, the Jesus of History appeals to us, the fact of Christ is indubitable to us. Not only in Christendom, but in the other religions of the world—Hinduism, Buddhism, even Mohammedanism—this appeal of Christ begins to be recognized. "I believe in Jesus Christ" comes nearer to be a universal expression of man's religious consciousness than any other formula or credal article.

We start there. How He was born, and how He rose again after death, are very secondary questions, compared with the actual effect of His life and word, and since His death, of His living presence with men. He revealed God as His Father, and as our Father. And we believe in God, as He revealed Him, not the terrifying omnipotence which made all things, not the awful holiness which says the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God, not the despotic and arbitrary authority, which demands obedience and acceptance of His will, in defiance of our convictions and our moral sense, but God, the God and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, God who may be defined and can only be rightly defined as Love. All other and lower ideas of God must be submitted to this supreme idea. If God is the Almighty, He is almighty Love. If He will not endure iniquity, it is as Love that He wages war against it. If He is a consuming fire, that fire is love, and consumes only what is incompatible with love.

The only credal statement about God that meets the best thought of our time is this which we have derived from Jesus Christ: we believe in God who is Love; we believe in love, because it is God's essential nature. We believe in the Holy Spirit, that personal indwelling of God, by which we are conscious of being His children and are able to call Him Father. The same Spirit brings the life and the words or Jesus Christ not only to remembrance, but to assimilation, and produces a Christ-likeness which we recognize in others, and desire in ourselves, as the only true Christianity. By the Holy Spirit we have faith in Jesus Christ as the propitiation for our sins; we are forgiven and cleansed. Of this regeneration baptism is the symbol. By the Holy Spirit the inward life is built up and developed, Christ in this way living in us. This nourishing and perfecting of the life is symbolized by the Holy Supper. Thus the Holy Spirit is at work in the world to carry out the plan which God had in evolving it, which is the manifestation of the sons of God, and a perfect human society, or Kingdom of God on earth. We believe that the Church is the society of those who believe in Christ, a society which is partly here and

partly beyond, the general assembly and Church of the first-born enrolled in Heaven. The many Church institutions are trying to unite and to extend the people of God. But the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is a mystical fact, constituted by Christ as the Head, and the members who are one in Him. To know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent is life eternal. Death was defeated by Christ's death and life. And when those who believe in Him die they will come to His Judgment, and pass on into their proper life which is the life of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. We believe therefore in a process which will eventually be completed, when God will be all in all, and the life which here is but prelude and probation will be achievement and perfection.

I venture with much diffidence to suggest a creed, which will be found at the end of the book, not in any way to supersede the historic creeds, which will continue to be recited in church assemblies, but in the hope of putting together the things which we practically believe to-day, the things which make and maintain the Christian life. Such a formula, without claiming more than a temporary value, may draw together a large number of people who hesitate to declare their faith in all the traditional theology of the Church. It is the *credo* of the heart rather than of the head. But, as Keats saw in a flash of insight, it is the heart, rather than the head, which is the Bible of the soul.

Now it remains only to mark the double, or even triple, meaning of Faith, in our ordinary speech. The ambiguity already makes its appearance in the New

Testament. In the course of Church history it continues to cause a certain confusion, which we should try to remove. In the present book Faith is regarded as an endowment of the human spirit, a gift of God, by which we are able to know Him, to commune with Him, to learn His will and to carry it out. In the New Testament the usage of the word varies. In almost all cases faith is the exercise of the faculty by which we know God and find Him. It is rather remarkable that the Fourth Gospel, which is our greatest aid in exercising faith, avoids, and evidently of set purpose avoids, the use of the word. The corresponding verb, which may mean " believe " or " trust " is used with repeated and ever-gathering emphasis ; for the whole object of the book is " that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in His name " (John xx. 31).

But the noun " faith " is avoided, no doubt because when this Gospel was written, the word began to be employed in the objective sense, the body of things believed. In the later books of the New Testament, e.g. in the Pastoral Epistles, this usage appears. " The faith once for all delivered to the saints " obviously means the Creed, the body of beliefs which constitute the Christian religion. This usage gathered momentum in the centuries during which the creeds were being formed. And in modern usage we speak of the different religious faiths, meaning the doctrines or beliefs which constitute the religion in question—Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Mohammedan, etc.

To avoid this ambiguity, the Fourth Gospel, which

is the most spiritual and in some ways the most complete, presentation of essential Christianity, the word faith is dropped, and sole attention is given to believing or trusting: "He that believes has everlasting life"; "Whosoever believes or trusts in Jesus Christ, out of him flow the rivers of living water, the Spirit of God." The faculty of Faith in exercise, or being called into exercise, is the theme of this writing which avoids the name of faith.

And there was reason for this caution. For, too rapidly the objective meaning of faith obtained the upper hand. From the time of the formation of the creeds onward faith meant the body of beliefs which the Church approved, and salvation was held to lie in the acceptance or confession of those beliefs. The intellectual assent to the creed of the Church was substituted for the faith which St. Paul or St. John enjoined; and too soon the position of the Athanasian Creed was reached, that whoever did not accept such and such a credal statement, should without doubt perish everlastingly.

But this was to lose altogether the meaning of Faith as the Christian gospel used the term. "The life that I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." That means the vital trust in a person, which produces a fellowship with him, and makes his life flow through the one who has such trust in him. This is very different, indeed, from accepting the articles of a creed. One might easily accept and recite and even mean, all the creeds, and yet never have that faith in the Son of God. On

the other hand, one might have, and many have had, that living and transforming faith, without believing the articles of the creed, without even knowing them. When the apostles called men to faith, they did not offer the Creed, the *Apostolicum*, and demand the acceptance of its articles; they said: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." That confusion between intellectual assent, and heart-felt faith, has been disastrous indeed in the history of the Church. It has produced heretics and bigots; it has poisoned religion, or turned it from a life-giving power into a subject of vain contention, hair-splitting argument, persecution, martyrdom. Above all things therefore it is necessary that we should have faith, what Jesus Christ meant by faith, what those first believers meant by it, what those greatest exponents of it, St. Paul and St. John, meant by it. Among the faculties of the mind knowledge, memory, reasoning, apprehension of truth—we must distinguish that supreme faculty of Faith. "Have faith in God," says the Master; "I believe in God, I believe also in Thee," responds the disciple.

By that faculty the soul knows God; by that faculty the soul receives Christ; by that faculty the Holy Spirit is received and retained and allowed to work. By that faculty our human nature partakes of the divine nature. By that faculty we have Eternal Life.

The faith once for all delivered to the saints I hold and cherish; it grows dearer and clearer as life goes on. But I hold it by the faculty of Faith. Not as a matter of reasoning or of ratiocinative demonstration,

but as an affair of the heart, as an experience of life. Thus faith in God, and in Christ, does not mean holding correct opinions about the nature of God, or the nature of Christ, or the relation of one to the other; but it means the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, a knowledge which wins love and demands obedience, a knowledge which as it grows leads to the strenuous exertion of the will to be conformed entirely to the will of God. "Faith," said Fénelon, "is necessarily based upon antecedent acts of intelligence. By the use of those powers of perception and reasoning which God has given us, we have the knowledge of the existence of God. It is by their use also we know that God has spoken to us in His revealed word.

"I illustrate the subject in this way: I suppose myself to be in a strange country. There is a wide forest before me, with which I am totally unacquainted, although I must pass through it. I accordingly select a guide whom I suppose to be able to conduct me through these ways never before trodden by me. In following this guide I obviously go by faith; but as I know the character of my guide, and as my intelligence or reason tells me that I ought to exercise such faith, it is clear that my faith in him is not in opposition to reason, but in accordance with it."

And, to bring the faculties of Reason and Faith into a harmony we may quote the words of an old writer, Nathaniel Culverwell:

"'Tis a work that requires our choicest thoughts, the exactest discussion that can be; a thing very material and desirable, to give unto Reason the things

that are Reason's and unto Faith the things that are Faith's; to give Faith her full scope and latitude, and to give Reason also her just bounds and limits; this is the first-born, but the other has the blessing. And yet there is not such a vast hiatus between them as some would imagine; no such implacable antipathy, no such irreconcilable jarring. There is a twin light springing from both, and they both spring from the same fountain of light, and they both sweetly conspire in the same end, the glory of that being from which they shine, and the welfare and happiness of that being on which they shine. So that to blaspheme Reason, 'tis to reproach Heaven itself, and to dishonour the God of Reason, to question the beauty of His image, and, by a strange ingratitude, to slight this great and royal gift of our Creator. For 'tis He who set up these two great luminaries in every heavenly soul, the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night; and though there be some kind of creatures that will bark at this lesser light, and others so severely critical as that they make mountains of those spots and speckles which they see in her face; yet others know how to be thankful for her weaker beams, and will follow the least light of God's setting up, though it be but the *candle of the Lord*."

And now, with great deference to the beliefs and experience of others, I am going to set down the creed which I personally can say with all my heart, not for others to accept, but as an example, as it were, to every Christian to set down the things which he, or

she, surely believes in. The creeds of Christendom stand unassailable, and probably incorrigible. But the Creed by which we live and die must be that which each can say without reservations and in fulness of faith.

THE CREED

I believe in Jesus Christ, born into the world, to reveal His Father as our Father; to show us by precept and example how we should live; and to offer in the Cross the remedy for human sin.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, His and the Father's, who continues His redeeming work in the world, through the lives of those who believe.

I believe in the eternal life which comes to those who by faith in Jesus are born of the Spirit; of this regeneration baptism is the symbol.

I believe in the spiritual life which is maintained by faith in Christ Jesus; of this life the Holy Supper is the symbol.

I believe in the Church, which is the society of those who believe in Him, holy, catholic and apostolic; of this Church our visible systems and institutions are but fragmentary and imperfect expressions.

I believe in the Divine purpose which is working through human history, not only to open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers, but in time to establish on earth the Kingdom of God.

I believe in God as Love, as Love that will not let men go, as Love that will finally conquer sin and sorrow and death.

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
LONDON: 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1
CAPE TOWN: 73 ST. GEORGE'S STREET
SYDNEY, N.S.W.: WYNWARD SQUARE
WELLINGTON, N.Z.: 4 WILLIS STREET

Christianity and the Present Moral Unrest

Cr. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

This volume of Essays is the outcome of some of the discussions which took place at the C.O.P.E.C. meetings in Birmingham in 1924. It is an attempt to answer the question how far the principles announced or implied in the teaching of Jesus are applicable to the present state of the world in the sense of supplying guidance for the solution of the more pressing moral and social problems of our time. Only one or two of the writers were themselves members of the C.O.P.E.C., so that it may be said rather to have been evoked by than to be the work of the Conference, which is in no way responsible for its contents.

The contributors include the Master of Balliol, Dr. G. F. Barbour, John Harvey, H. J. W. Hetherington, Mrs. A. D. Lindsay, J. H. Muirhead, Canon O. Quick, Canon C. E. Raven, D.D., J. Arthur Thomson, C. C. J. Webb, H. M. Wodehouse, and H. G. Wood.

Systematic Theology

("Dogmatik")

Cr. 8vo. By Dr. WILHELM HERRMANN 5s.

This book is, as Professor Rade says in his introduction, the fruit of forty-five years' teaching. It falls into three parts: first, dealing with religion in general and Christianity in particular; second, dealing with the victory of faith over the world; and third, with the overcoming of sin by faith. There is a final brief section dealing with Christology. This is one of the most important books of recent years in the sphere of theology.

Faith and Success

By BASIL KING

La. Cr. 8vo. Author of "The Conquest of Fear" 7s. 6d.

"The style of the book is worthy of its thought; higher praise could scarcely be given."—*Sunday Times.*

A Practical Faith

By the Rev. HAROLD ANSON

Cr. 8vo. Preface by the Rev. H. R. L. SHEPPARD 3s. 6d.

"An inspiring book, written with penetration, humour and a lofty spiritual ideal."—*Guardian.*

Foundations of Faith

III. Ecclesiological

Cr. 8vo. By Rev. W. E. ORCHARD, D.D. 5*s.*

"Dr. Orchard has a keen mind, piercing insight, wide sympathy and an increasingly devotional spirit. Most priests would learn much from his book."—*Church Times.*

Vol. I. Theological. Vol. II. Christological.

Jesus of Nazareth

His Times, His Life, and His Teaching

By JOSEPH KLAUSNER

Demy 8vo. Translated by Canon H. DANBY 18*s.*

"A work of extraordinary importance. . . . Must be accorded a prominent place among the resources of students of Christian origin."—*Inquirer.*

Prophecy and Eschatology

By NATHANIEL MICKLEM, M.A.

Author of "The Open Light," etc.

Cr. 8vo. (*Selly Oak Colleges Publications*, No. 9) 7*s.* 6*d.*

"A sane and strong book . . . marked by scholarship and a well-balanced judgment."—*Christian World.*

The Aim of Jesus Christ

A Critical Inquiry for the General Reader

By WILLIAM FORBES COOLEY, Ph.D.

Cr. 8vo. 7*s.* 6*d.*

"This careful and reverent study insists on a humanitarian view of Christ."—*The Times.*

The Quakers : Their Story and Message

By A. NEAVE BRAYSHAW, B.A., LL.B.

Cr. 8vo. *Cloth, 5s.; Paper, 3s. 6d.*

This new edition of a book which has been very highly appreciated in England and in America is virtually *a new work*. It contains the results of a life-study of original records relating to the Society of Friends, and helps the reader to picture the personalities of many Quaker leaders of early and later times. The relation of the early Friends' teaching to the thought of the time is dealt with more fully, the story is told of the breaking away from traditionalism shortly after the middle of the nineteenth century, and the history of the Quaker ministry is given at greater length. A new chapter has been written on the beginning of Quakerism in America and on the work of William Penn.

Finding the Trail of Life

By RUFUS M. JONES

Cr. 8vo. Professor of Philosophy in Haverford College 5s.

Professor Jones is a psychologist and philosopher of a rare kind. He discards all tiresome technical phraseology and scientific formulation of abstract principles, and presents his ideas in dramatic form. This, his latest book, is an autobiography of a boy ; it describes his life in a New England village under the influence of a Quaker upbringing ; and how, though very active and lively, he learnt to practise and enjoy an inward, mystical religion.

Sharing in Creation

Cr. 8vo. By W. COSBY BELL 7s. 6d.

The general theme of the present series is that no problem of life is completely soluble because the world is in the midst of a great process of the working out of things, the Creation being, from this point of view, still in progress.

A Study in Moral Theory

By Professor JOHN LAIRD, M.A.

Demy 8vo. 10s. 6d.

"This book is worthy of its author, and it will no doubt take its place among the best British textbooks on Ethics."—*The Times.*

All prices are net

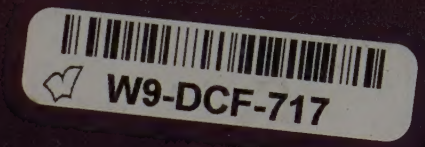
LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1

239 S
H 789

Horton, R.F.

The capacity for God

239 S
H 789


W9-DCF-717